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STAR WARS
A NEW HOPE
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STAR WARS®

A NEW HOPE ✪ BOOK ONE

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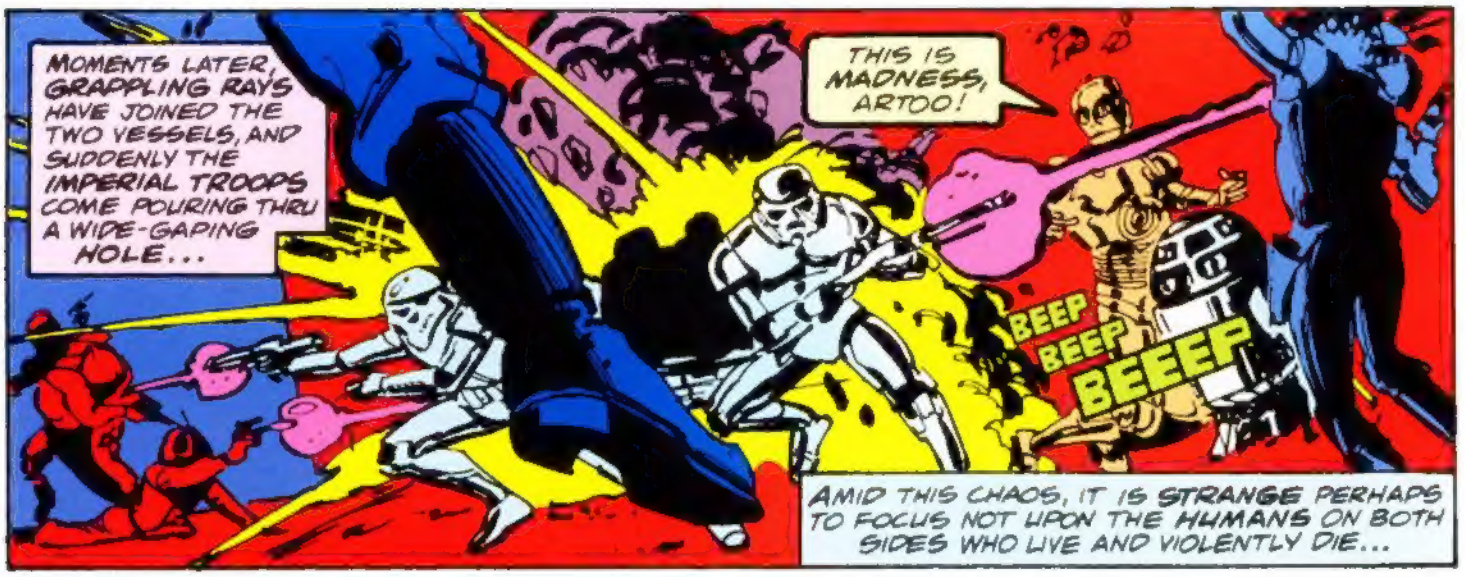
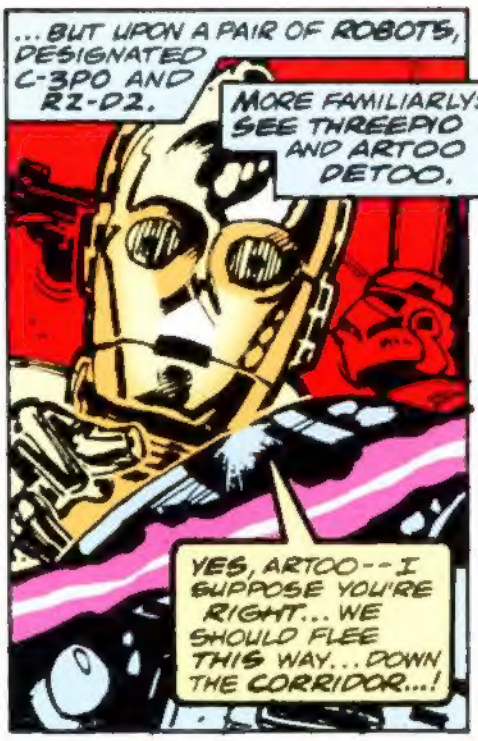
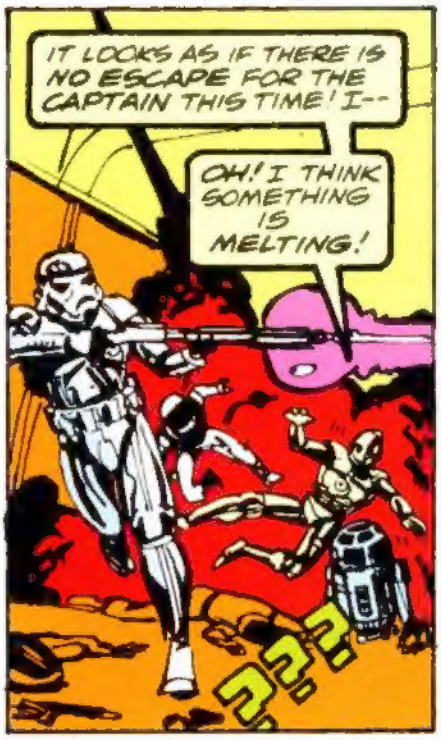
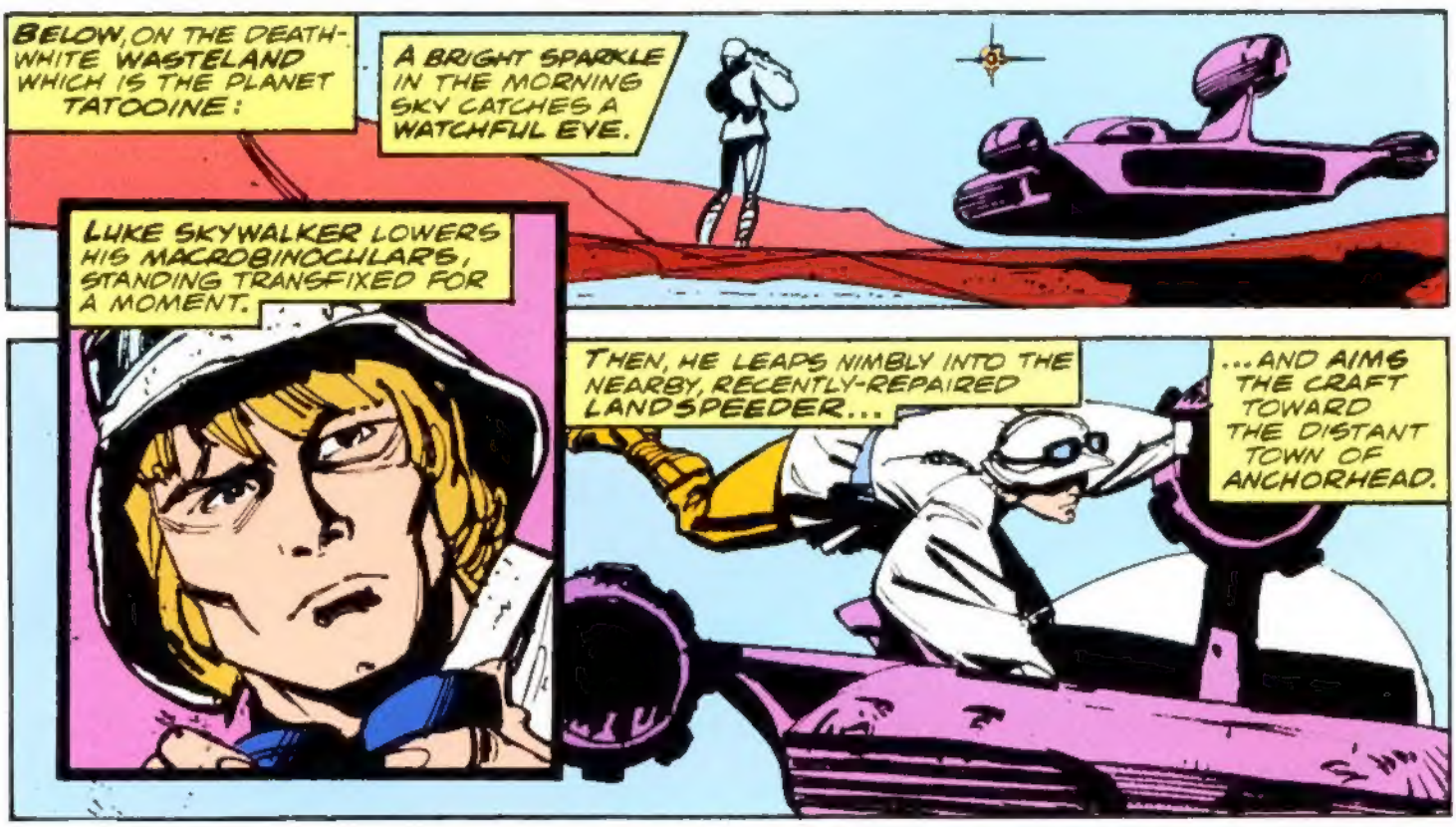
STAR WARS
ADAPTED FROM THE GEORGE LUCAS FILM,
A 20th CENTURY-FOX RELEASE
It is a period of CIVIL WAR in the galaxy.
A brave alliance of UNDERGROUND FREEDOM FIGHTERS has challenged the tyranny and oppression of the awesome GALACTIC EMPIRE.
To CRUSH the rebellion once and for all, the EMPIRE is constructing a sinister new BATTLE STATION. Powerful enough to destroy an entire planet, its COMPLETION will spell CERTAIN DOOM for the champions of freedom.
Striking from a fortress hidden among the billion stars of the galaxy, REBEL SPACESHIPS have won their first victory in a battle with the powerful IMPERIAL STARFLEET. The Empire fears that ANOTHER defeat could bring a THOUSAND MORE solar systems into the rebellion, and IMPERIAL CONTROL over the galaxy would be LOST FOREVER.
BUT, THAT IS THE NEAR FUTURE.
AT THIS MOMENT:
ABOVE THE YELLOW PLANET TATOOINE, A GIGANTIC IMPERIAL STARSHIP PURSUES A REBEL SPACECRAFT--ITS DEADLY LASER BOLTS DISINTEGRATE THE SMALLER SHIP'S MAIN SOLAR FIN WITH A SOULSEARING SHUDDER...!

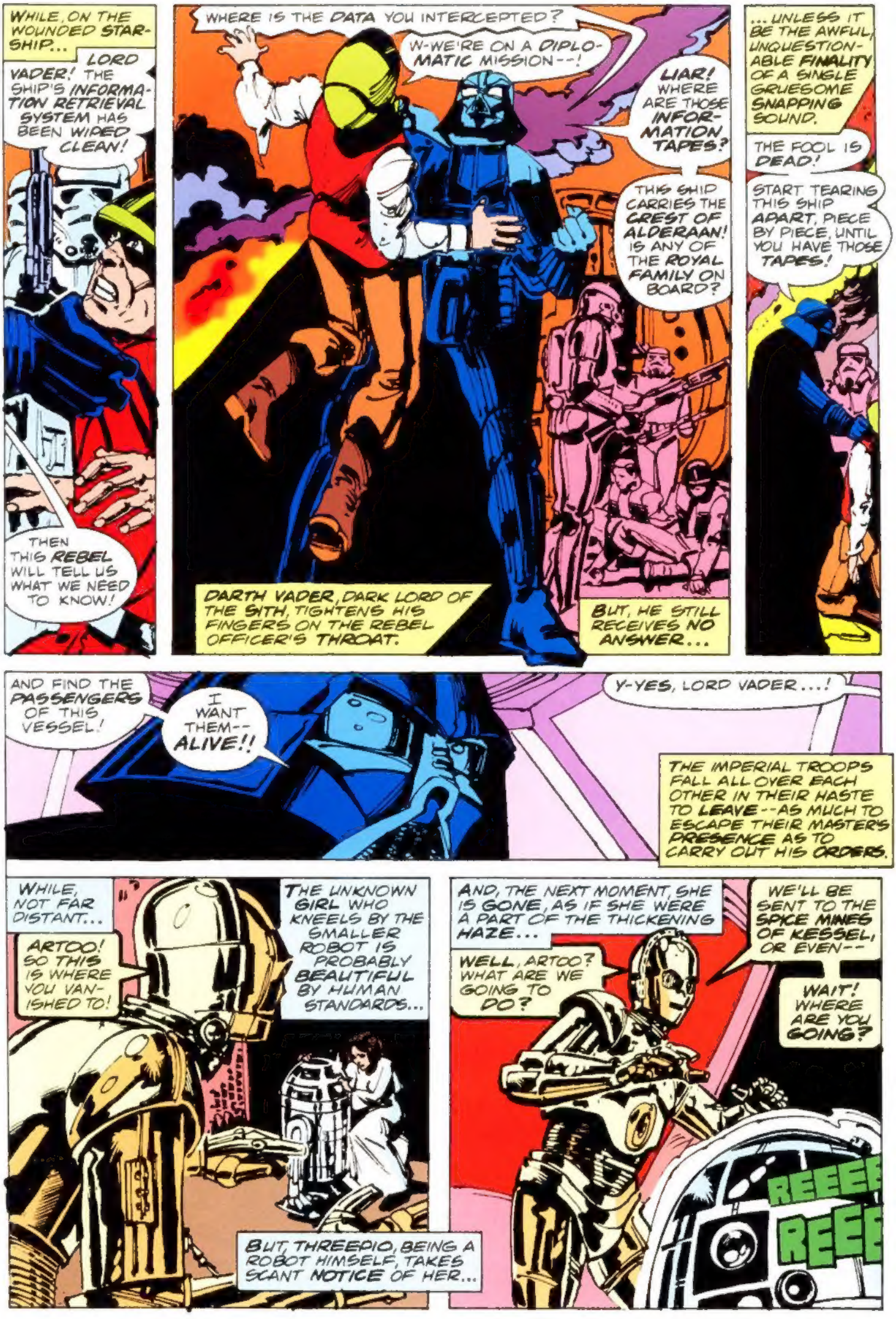

MOMENTS LATER, GRAPPLING RAYS HAVE JOINED THE TWO VESSELS, AND SUDDENLY THE IMPERIAL TROOPS COME POURING THRU A WIDE-GAPING HOLE...
THIS IS MADNESS, ARTOO!
BEEP BEEP BEEEP
AMID THIS CHAOS, IT IS STRANGE PERHAPS TO FOCUS NOT UPON THE HUMANS ON BOTH SIDES WHO LIVE AND VIOLENTLY DIE...

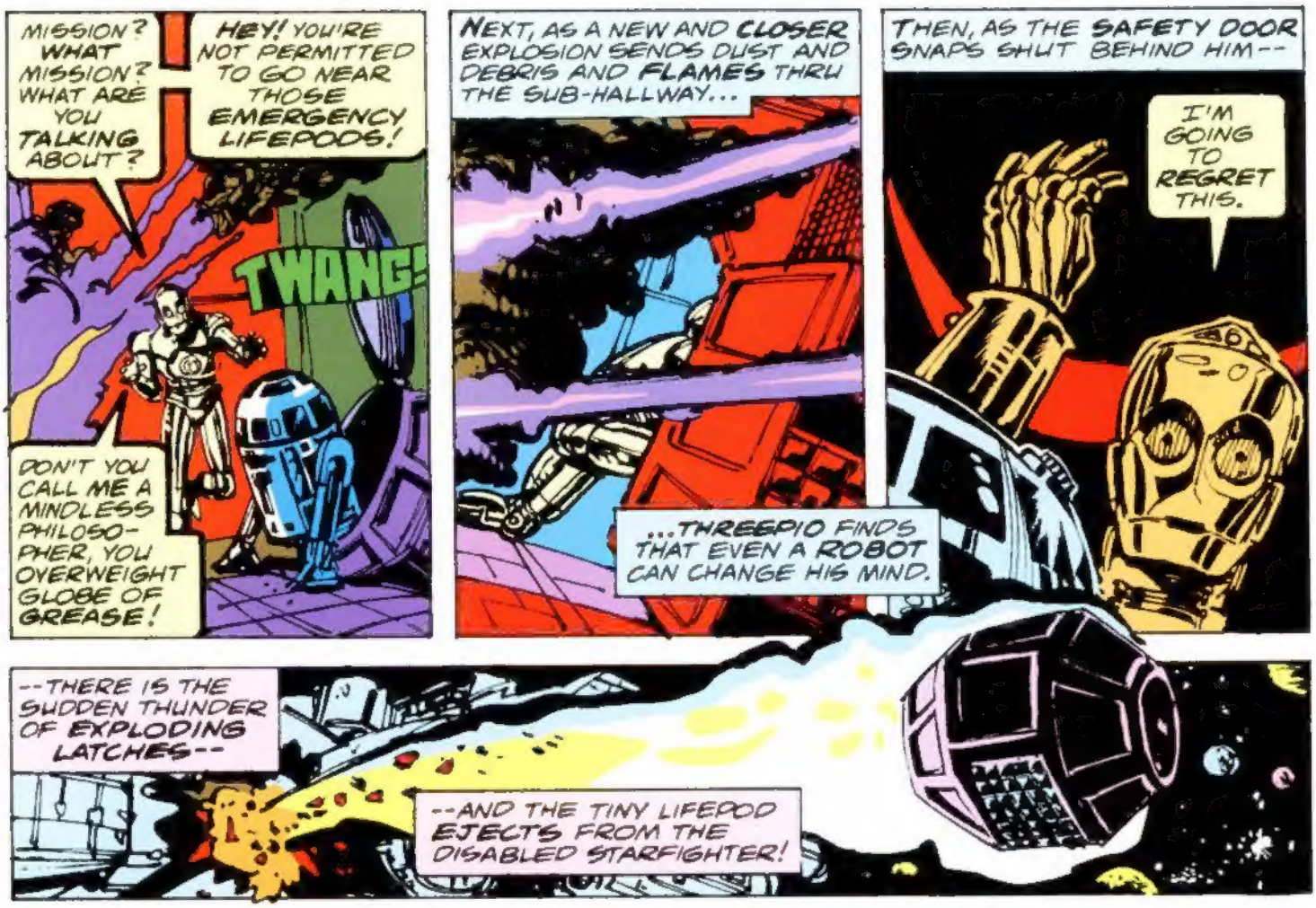

...BUT UPON A PAIR OF ROBOTS, DESIGNATED C-3PO AND R2-D2.
MORE FAMILIARLY: SEE THREEPIO AND ARTOO DETOO.
YES, ARTOO--I SUPPOSE YOU'RE RIGHT... WE SHOULD FLEE THIS WAY... DOWN THE CORRIDOR...!

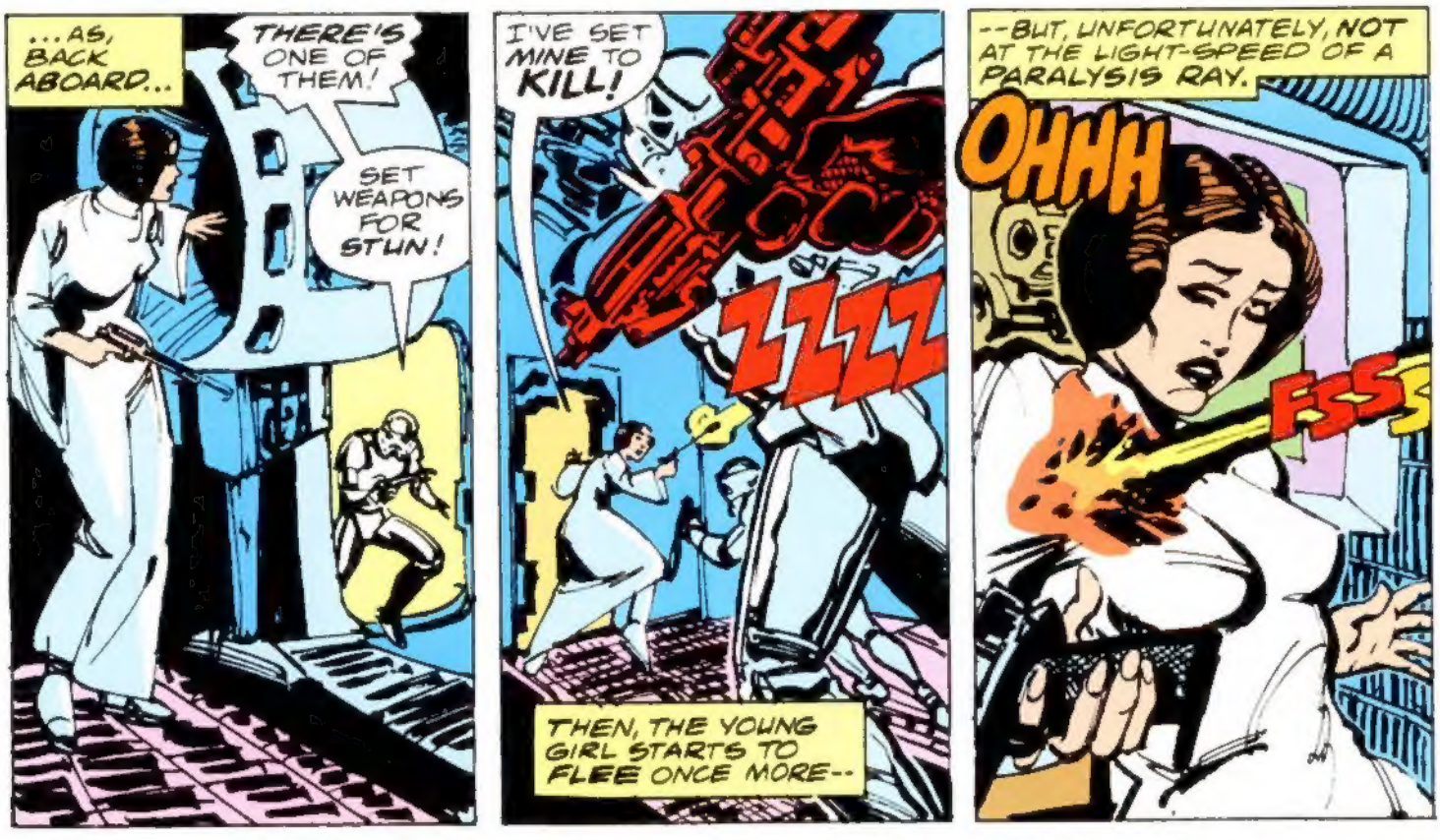

IT LOOKS AS IF THERE IS NO ESCAPE FOR THE CAPTAIN THIS TIME! I--
OH! I THINK SOMETHING IS MELTING!

THIS IS ALL YOUR FAULT!
I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN BETTER THAN TO TRUST THE LOGIC OF A HALF-SIZED THERMO-CAPSULARY DEHOUSING ASSISTER...!
HEY--WAIT UP! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
WHINE


BELOW, ON THE DEATH-WHITE WASTELAND WHICH IS THE PLANET TATOOINE:
A BRIGHT SPARKLE IN THE MORNING SKY CATCHES A WATCHFUL EYE.
LUKE SKYWALKER LOWERS HIS MACROBINOCULARS, STANDING TRANSFIXED FOR A MOMENT.
THEN, HE LEAPS NIMBLY INTO THE NEARBY, RECENTLY-REPAIRED LANDSPEEDER...
...AND AIMS THE CRAFT TOWARD THE DISTANT TOWN OF ANCHORHEAD.

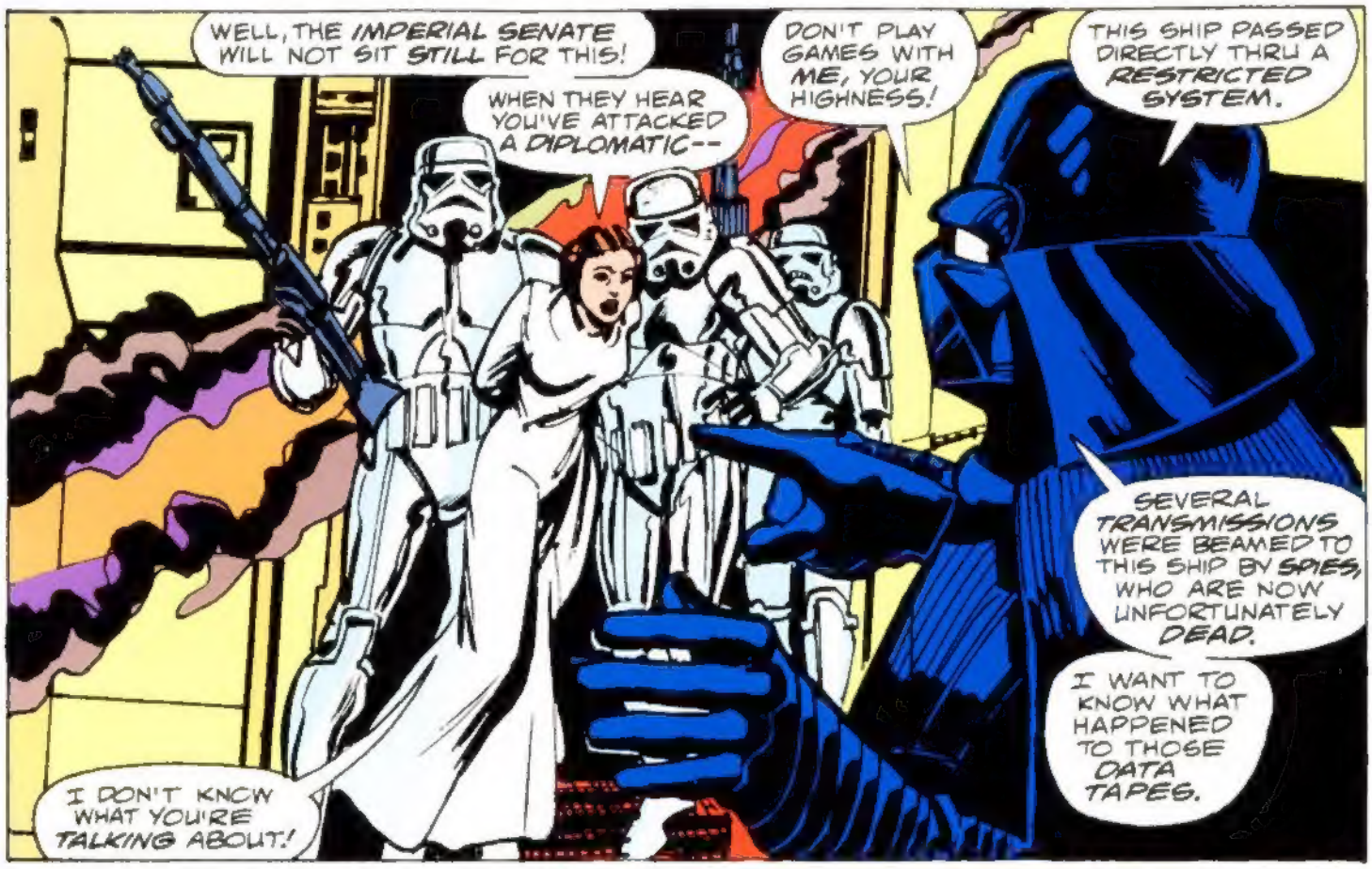

WHILE, ON THE WOUNDED STAR-SHIP...
LORD VADER! THE SHIP'S INFORMATION RETRIEVAL SYSTEM HAS BEEN WIPED CLEAN!
THEN THIS REBEL WILL TELL US WHAT WE NEED TO KNOW!
WHERE IS THE DATA YOU INTERCEPTED?
W-WE'RE ON A DIPLOMATIC MISSION--!
LIAR! WHERE ARE THOSE INFORMATION TAPES?
THIS SHIP CARRIES THE CREST OF ALDERAAN! IS ANY OF THE ROYAL FAMILY ON BOARD?
DARTH VADER, DARK LORD OF THE SITH, TIGHTENS HIS FINGERS ON THE REBEL OFFICER'S THROAT.
BUT, HE STILL RECEIVES NO ANSWER...
...UNLESS IT BE THE AWFUL, UNQUESTIONABLE FINALITY OF A SINGLE GRUESOME SNAPPING SOUND.
THE FOOL IS DEAD!
START TEARING THIS SHIP APART, PIECE BY PIECE, UNTIL YOU HAVE THOSE TAPES!
AND FIND THE PASSENGERS OF THIS VESSEL!
I WANT THEM-- ALIVE!!
Y-YES, LORD VADER...!
THE IMPERIAL TROOPS FALL ALL OVER EACH OTHER IN THEIR HASTE TO LEAVE--AS MUCH TO ESCAPE THEIR MASTER'S PRESENCE AS TO CARRY OUT HIS ORDERS.
WHILE, NOT FAR DISTANT...
ARTOO! SO THIS IS WHERE YOU VANISHED TO!
THE UNKNOWN GIRL WHO KNEELS BY THE SMALLER ROBOT IS PROBABLY BEAUTIFUL BY HUMAN STANDARDS...
BUT, THREEPIO, BEING A ROBOT HIMSELF, TAKES SCANT NOTICE OF HER...
AND, THE NEXT MOMENT, SHE IS GONE, AS IF SHE WERE A PART OF THE THICKENING HAZE...
WELL, ARTOO? WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?
WE'LL BE SENT TO THE SPICE MINES OF KESSEL, OR EVEN--
WAIT! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
REEEE
REEE

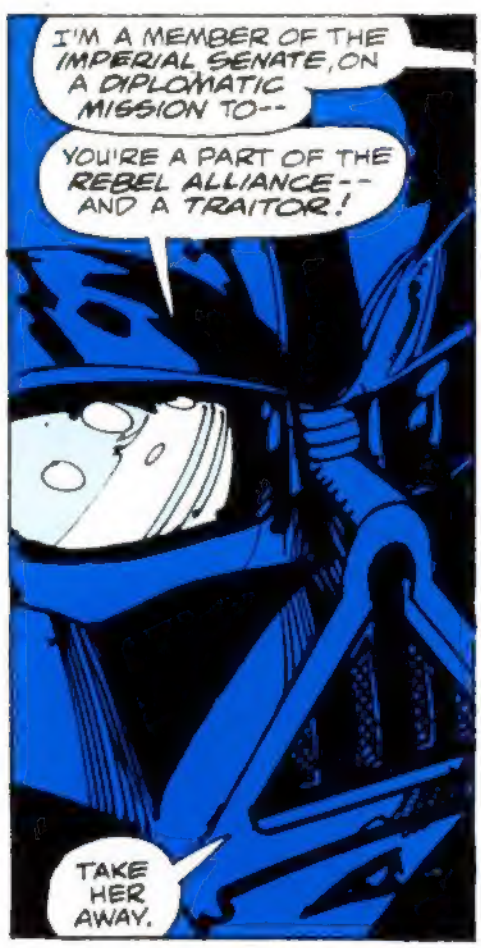

MISSION? WHAT MISSION? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
HEY! YOU'RE NOT PERMITTED TO GO NEAR THOSE EMERGENCY LIFEPODS!
TWANG!
DON'T YOU CALL ME A MINDLESS PHILOSOPHER, YOU OVERWEIGHT GLOBE OF GREASE!
NEXT, AS A NEW AND CLOSER EXPLOSION SENDS DUST AND DEBRIS AND FLAMES THRU THE SUB-HALLWAY...
...THREEPIO FINDS THAT EVEN A ROBOT CAN CHANGE HIS MIND.
THEN, AS THE SAFETY DOOR SNAPS SHUT BEHIND HIM--
I'M GOING TO REGRET THIS.
--THERE IS THE SUDDEN THUNDER OF EXPLODING LATCHES--
--AND THE TINY LIFEPOD EJECTS FROM THE DISABLED STARFIGHTER!


...AS, BACK ABOARD...
THERE'S ONE OF THEM!
SET WEAPONS FOR STUN!
I'VE SET MINE TO KILL!
ZZZZ
THEN, THE YOUNG GIRL STARTS TO FLEE ONCE MORE--
--BUT, UNFORTUNATELY, NOT AT THE LIGHT-SPEED OF A PARALYSIS RAY.
OHHH
FSSS
SHE'LL BE ALL RIGHT.
REPORT TO LORD VADER!

WHILE, ON TATOOINE (CITY: ANCHORHEAD)...
I'VE TOLD YOU KIDS TO SLOW DOWN!
SHREEE
HEY, CAMIE--DID I HEAR A YOUNG NOISE BLAST THRU HERE?
IT WAS JUST WORMIE ON ANOTHER RAMPAGE, FIXER.
SHAPE IT UP, YOU TWO! I--BIGGS!
WHEN DID YOU GET BACK?
JUST NOW! I THOUGHT YOU'D BE HERE--CERTAINLY DIDN'T EXPECT YOU TO BE OUT WORKING!
HEY, WHAT HAPPENED? DIDN'T YOU GET YOUR COMMIS-SION?
WHY, UH--OF COURSE I GOT IT! SIGNED ABOARD THE RAND ECLIPTIC LAST WEEK.
FIRST MATE BIGGS DARKLIGHTER AT YOUR SERVICE!
I JUST CAME BACK TO SAY GOODBYE TO ALL YOU UNFORTUNATE LANDLOCKED SIMPLETONS.
WAIT! I ALMOST FORGOT--
THERE'S A BATTLE GOING ON--RIGHT HERE IN OUR SYSTEM!
COME AND LOOK!
NOT AGAIN! FORGET IT, BIGGS--HE'S ALWAYS--
NO, I MEAN IT. COME ON.
UP THERE! CAN YOU SEE--?
THAT'S NO BATTLE, HOT-SHOT. THEY'RE JUST SITTING THERE.
PROBABLY A FREIGHTER-TANKER REFUELING.
BUT, THERE WAS A LOT OF FIRING EARLIER...!
I KEEP TELLING YOU, WORMIE--THE REBELLION'S A LONG WAY FROM HERE; I DOUBT IF THE EMPIRE WOULD EVEN FIGHT TO KEEP THIS SYSTEM.
BELIEVE ME, LUKE--THIS PLANET IS A BIG HUNK OF NOTHING!

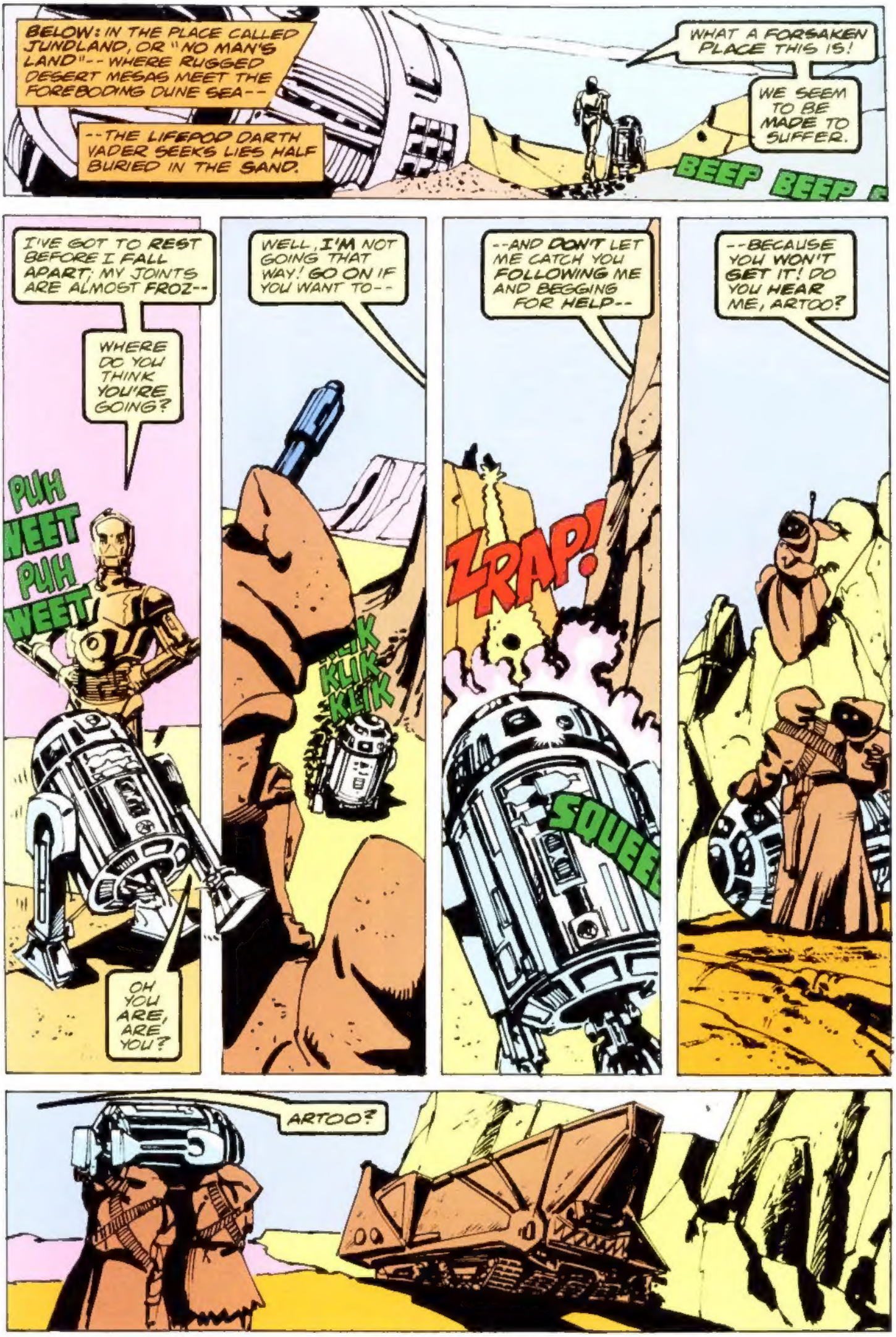
WHILE, OUT IN SPACE...
LORD VADER!
I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN--ONLY YOU COULD BE SO BOLD!


WELL, THE IMPERIAL SENATE WILL NOT SIT STILL FOR THIS!
WHEN THEY HEAR YOU'VE ATTACKED A DIPLOMATIC--
DON'T PLAY GAMES WITH ME, YOUR HIGHNESS!
THIS SHIP PASSED DIRECTLY THRU A RESTRICTED SYSTEM.
SEVERAL TRANSMISSIONS WERE BEAMED TO THIS SHIP BY SPIES, WHO ARE NOW UNFORTUNATELY DEAD.
I WANT TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO THOSE DATA TAPES.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT!


I'M A MEMBER OF THE IMPERIAL SENATE, ON A DIPLOMATIC MISSION TO--
YOU'RE A PART OF THE REBEL ALLIANCE--AND A TRAITOR!
TAKE HER AWAY.

SHE SHOULD BE DESTROYED, LORD VADER.
MY DUTY IS TO FIND THE REBELS' HIDDEN FORTRESS, COMMANDER.
SHE IS MY ONLY LINK TO DISCOVERING ITS LOCATION--AND I INTEND TO USE IT.
MEANWHILE, SEND A DISTRESS SIGNAL--CALL IT A METEORITE STORM--

VAPORIZE THIS SHIP; DON'T LEAVE ANYTHING.
THEN, INFORM HER FATHER AND THE SENATE THAT ALL ABOARD WERE KILLED.
I'VE BEEN INFORMED THAT A REPAIR POD WAS SOMEHOW JETTISONED DURING THE FIGHTING.
THE DATA TAPES MUST BE HIDDEN IN IT--SO SEND A DETACHMENT DOWN TO RETRIEVE THEM, WITHOUT ATTRACTING ATTENTION.

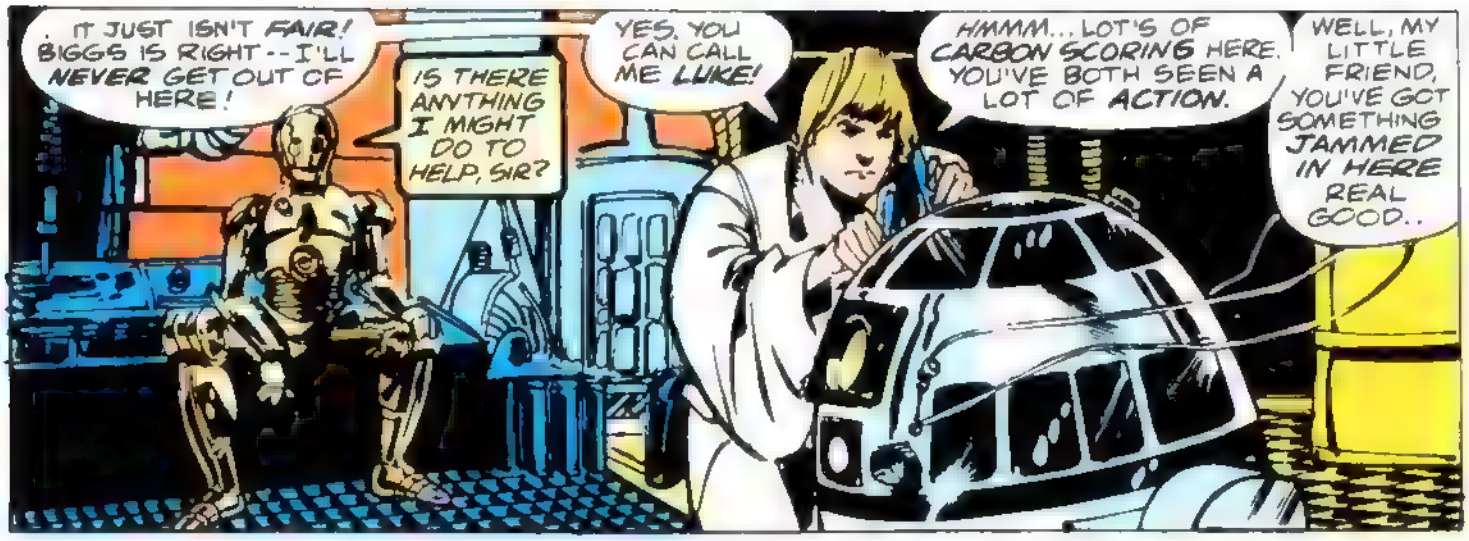

BELOW: IN THE PLACE CALLED JUNDLAND, OR "NO MAN'S LAND"-- WHERE RUGGED DESERT MESAS MEET THE FOREBODING DUNE SEA--
--THE LIFEPOD DARTH VADER SEEKS LIES HALF BURIED IN THE SAND.
WHAT A FORSAKEN PLACE THIS IS!
WE SEEM TO BE MADE TO SUFFER.
BEEP BEEP
I'VE GOT TO REST BEFORE I FALL APART. MY JOINTS ARE ALMOST FROZ--
WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING?
PUH WEET PUH WEET
OH YOU ARE, ARE YOU?
WELL, I'M NOT GOING THAT WAY! GO ON IF YOU WANT TO--
KLIK KLIK KLIK
--AND DON'T LET ME CATCH YOU FOLLOWING ME AND BEGGING FOR HELP--
ZRAP!
SQUEE
--BECAUSE YOU WON'T GET IT! DO YOU HEAR ME, ARTOO?
ARTOO?

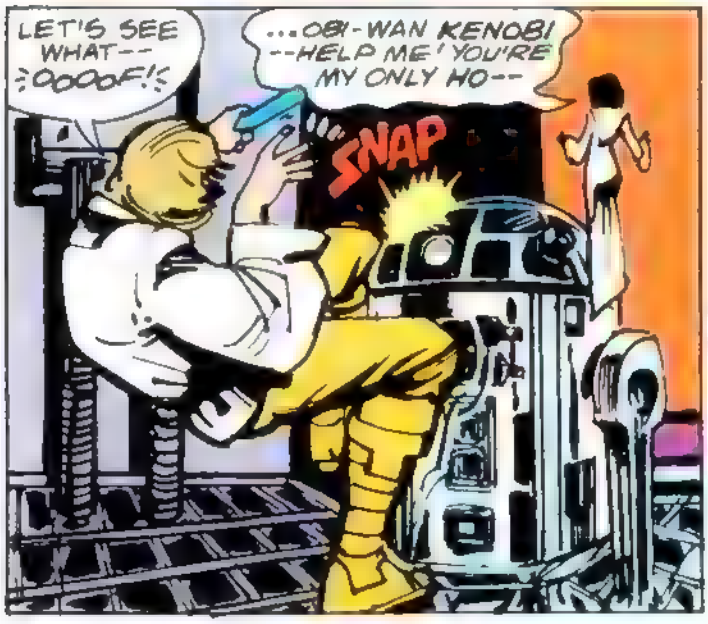
THINGS HAVEN'T BEEN THE SAME SINCE YOU LEFT TATOOINE, BIGGS.
IT'S BEEN SO... QUIET.
LUKE--I SHOULDN'T TELL YOU THIS, BUT YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE I CAN TRUST.
AND, IF I DON'T COME BACK--I WANT SOMEBODY TO KNOW--!
WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
I MADE SOME FRIENDS AT THE ACADEMY, LUKE.
WHEN OUR FRIGATE GOES TO ONE OF THE CENTRAL SYSTEMS, WE'RE GOING TO JUMP SHIP AND JOIN THE ALLIANCE.
JOIN THE REBELLION? ARE YOU KIDDING? HOW?
QUIET DOWN, WILL YOU? MY FRIEND HAS A FRIEND ON BESTINE WHO MIGHT HELP US MAKE CONTACT.
YOU'RE CRAZY! YOU COULD WANDER AROUND FOREVER TRYING TO FIND THEM.
I KNOW IT'S A LONG SHOT, BUT--
I'M NOT GOING TO WAIT FOR THE EMPIRE TO DRAFT ME INTO SERVICE.
THIS REBELLION IS SPREADING, AND I WANT TO BE ON THE SIDE I BELIEVE IN.
AND I'M STUCK HERE ON TATOOINE!
I THOUGHT YOU WERE GOING TO THE ACADEMY NEXT TURN--GET OFF THIS ROCK--!
NOT LIKELY! MY UNCLE NEEDS ME HERE, FOR JUST ONE MORE SEASON.
I CAN'T LEAVE HIM NOW!
WHAT GOOD IS ALL YOUR UNCLE'S WORK, IF HE ENDS UP MERELY A TENANT SOON--SLAVING AWAY FOR THE GREATER GLORY OF THE EMPIRE?
WELL, I'VE GOT TO GO... I'M LEAVING IN THE MORNING.
THEN I GUESS I WON'T SEE YOU...
MAYBE SOMEDAY. I'LL KEEP A LOOKOUT.
TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF, BIGGS. YOU'LL ALWAYS BE THE BEST FRIEND I'VE GOT!

WHILE, IN A SOULLESS IMPERIAL CONFERENCE ROOM, SOMEWHERE IN THE GALAXY...
...I TELL YOU, DARTH VADER HAS GONE, TOO FAR!
THIS SITH LORD SENT BY THE EMPEROR WILL BE OUR UNDOING.
THE REBEL ALLIANCE IS MORE DANGEROUS THAN YOU REALIZE!
DANGEROUS TO YOUR STARFLEET, COMMANDER TAGGE -- NOT TO THIS BATTLE-STATION!
YOU'RE A FOOL, ADMIRAL MOTTI!
THE REBELLION WILL CONTINUE TO GAIN SUPPORT IN THE IMPERIAL SENATE, AS LONG AS --
THE IMPERIAL SENATE IS NO LONGER OF ANY CONCERN TO US, GENTLEMEN.
IT'S GRAND MOFF TARKIN -- AND DARTH VADER!
I HAVE JUST RECEIVED WORD THAT THE EMPEROR HAS DISSOLVED THE COUNCIL -- PERMANENTLY.
THE LAST REMNANTS OF THE OLD REPUBLIC HAVE BEEN SWEPT AWAY.
THE REGIONAL GOVERNORS NOW HAVE DIRECT CONTROL OVER THEIR TERRITORIES.
IMPOSSIBLE! HOW WILL THE EMPEROR MAINTAIN CONTROL WITHOUT THE BUREAUCRACY?
FEAR WILL KEEP THE LOCAL SYSTEMS IN LINE -- FEAR OF THIS BATTLE-STATION WHICH NEARS COMPLETION.
AND WHAT OF THE REBELLION, GOVERNOR TARKIN?
IF THE REBELS HAVE OBTAINED A COMPLETE TECHNICAL READ-OUT OF THIS BATTLE-STATION IT IS POSSIBLE -- HOWEVER, UNLIKELY -- THAT THEY MIGHT FIND A WEAKNESS AND EXPLOIT IT.
THE TECHNICAL DATA YOU REFER TO WILL SOON BE BACK IN OUR HANDS.

ANY ATTACK MADE AGAINST THIS STATION BY THE REBELS WOULD BE A USELESS GESTURE, NO MATTER WHAT TECHNICAL DATA THEY'VE OBTAINED.
THIS BATTLE STATION IS NOW THE ULTIMATE POWER IN THE UNIVERSE!
DON'T BECOME TOO PROUD OF THIS TECHNOLOGICAL TERROR YOU'VE CREATED, ADMIRAL MOTTI.
THE ABILITY TO DESTROY A PLANET IS INSIGNIFICANT NEXT TO THE COSMIC FORCE!
DON'T TRY TO FRIGHTEN US WITH YOUR SORCERER'S WAYS, LORD VADER!
YOUR SAD DEVOTION TO THAT ANCIENT RELIGION HASN'T HELPED YOU CONJURE UP THOSE STOLEN DATA TAPES--
--OR ENABLED YOU TO FIND THE REBELS' HIDDEN FORTRESS.
WHY, I HAVE TO LAUGH--AH--CHOKES--CAN'T BREATHE--I--
I FIND YOUR LACK OF FAITH DISTURBING.
ENOUGH OF THIS! VADER--RELEASE HIM!
THIS BICKERING IS POINTLESS.
LORD VADER WILL FIND THE LOCATION OF THE REBEL FORTRESS BY THE TIME THIS STATION IS OPERATIONAL.
THEN, WE WILL CRUSH THE REBELLION WITH ONE SWIFT STRIKE!
AND, BACK ON TATOOINE, ABOARD THE LUMBERING SANDCRAWLER OF THE DESERT-DWELLING JAWAS...
WILL THIS NEVER END?
WAKE UP, ARTOO! WAKE UP!
WE'VE STOPPED! WE'RE DOOMED!
DO YOU THINK THE JAWAS WILL MELT US DOWN?
WHEET WHEET
YOU'RE A GREAT COMFORT.
SUDDENLY, THROUGH AN OPENING HATCH, BLINDING WHITE LIGHT FILLS THE CHAMBER...
THEY WANT US TO GO OUTSIDE.
I WAS RIGHT! WE ARE DOOMED!

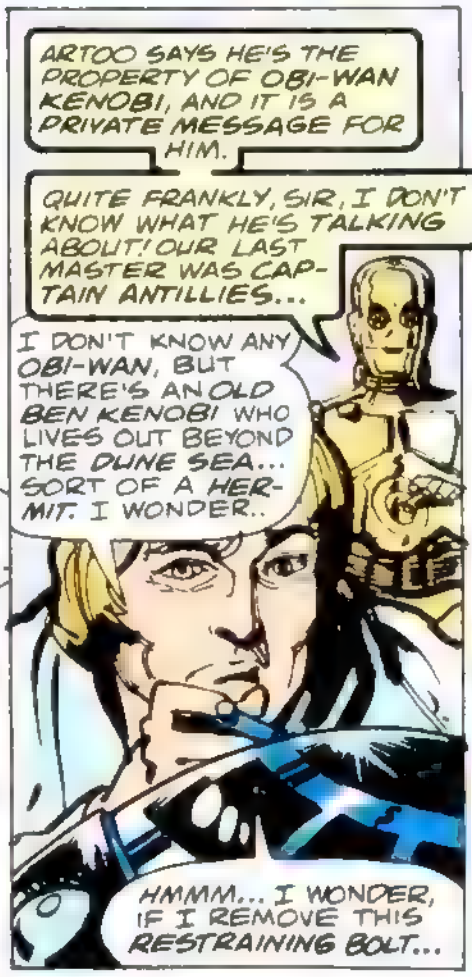
LUKE-- TELL YOUR UNCLE OWEN THAT IF HE GETS A TRANS-LATOR TO BE SURE IT SPEAKS "BOCCE"!
IT LOOKS LIKE WE DON'T HAVE MUCH OF A CHOICE, AUNT BERU. BUT I'LL REMIND HIM.
YES, THIS R2-D2 MODEL WILL DO FINE; THAT OTHER ONE OVER THERE LOOKS READY FOR THE JUNKHEAP.
SAVE YOUR SALES PITCH! YOU-- ROBOT --DO YOU KNOW ETIQUETTE AND PROTOCOL?
DO I KNOW PROTOCOL! WHY, IT'S MY PRIMARY FUNCTION!
I AM WELL VERSED IN THE CUSTOMS AND--
I DON'T NEED A PRO-TOCOL DROID! I NEED A DROID THAT KNOWS SOMETHING ABOUT THE B NARY LANGUAGE OF MOISTURE VAPOR-ATORS.
VAPORATORS! SIR, MY FIRST JOB WAS PRO-GRAMMING BINARY LOAD LIFTERS, A VERY SIMILAR--
DO YOU SPEAK "BOCCE"?
IT'S LIKE A SEC-OND LANGUAGE FOR ME, SIR. I'M AS FLUENT AS--
SHUT UP!
I'LL TAKE THIS ONE.
SHUTTING UP, SIR.
LUKE, TAKE THEM TO THE GARAGE AND CLEAN THEM UP.
BUT I WAS GOING INTO TOSHI STATION TO--
AFTER YOU'VE FINISHED YOUR CHORES!
UNCLE OWEN -- THIS R2 UNIT HAS A BAD MOTIVATOR. LOOK!
SPRING!
IF I MIGHT SAY SO, SIR, THIS R2 UNIT IS IN TOP CONDITION --A REAL BARGAIN.
THEN WE'LL TAKE IT--AS A REPLACE-MENT.
I'LL TAKE CARE OF THE JAWAS, LUKE. RUN ALONG.
BLEEP!
DON'T YOU FORGET THIS, ARTOO!
WHY I STICK MY NECK OUT FOR YOU IS BE-YOND MY CAPACITY TO--
BEEPBEEPBEEP


IT JUST ISN'T FAIR! BIGGS IS RIGHT--I'LL NEVER GET OUT OF HERE!
IS THERE ANYTHING I MIGHT DO TO HELP, SIR?
YES. YOU CAN CALL ME LUKE!
HMMM... LOT'S OF CARBON SCORING HERE. YOU'VE BOTH SEEN A LOT OF ACTION.
WELL, MY LITTLE FRIEND, YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING JAMMED IN HERE REAL GOOD..


LET'S SEE WHAT--
;OOOOF!;
...OBI-WAN KENOBI --HELP ME! YOU'RE MY ONLY HO--
SNAP

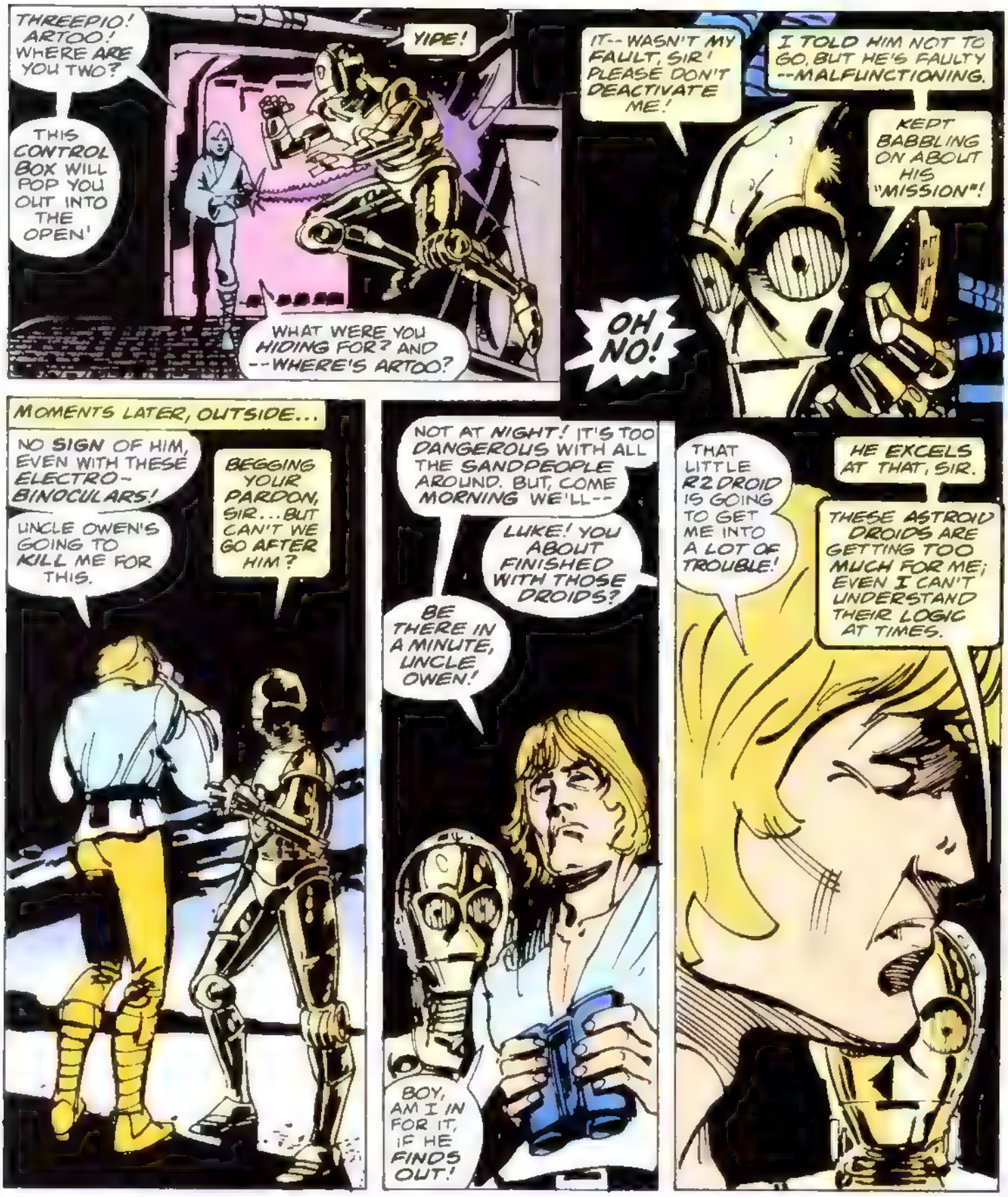
WHAT'S THIS?? A THREE-DIMENSIONAL HOLOGRAM--AND SHE'S BEAUTIFUL!
...OBI-WAN KENOBI ...HELP ME! YOU'RY MY ONLY HO--
BREEP!

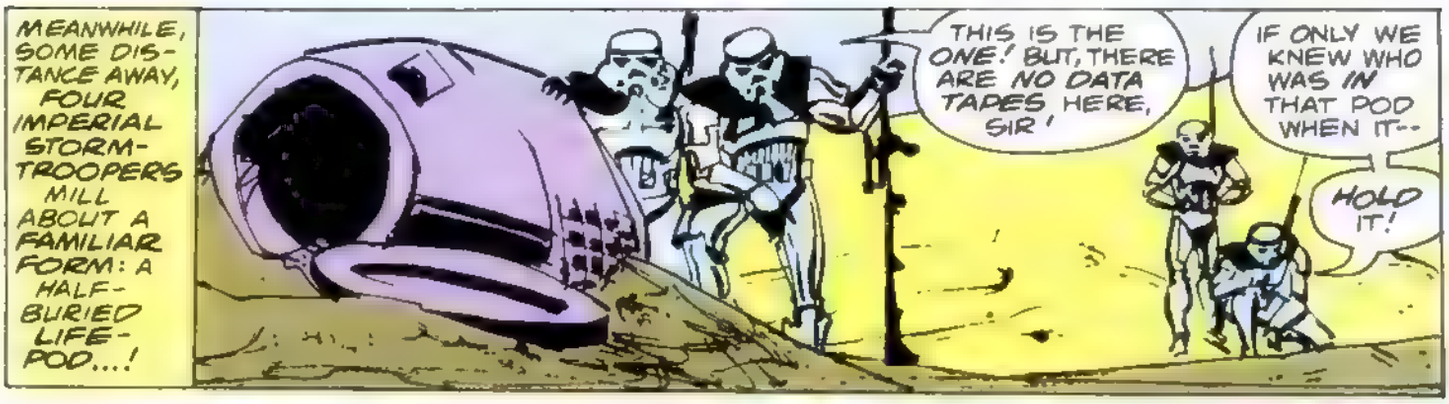
ARTOO SAYS IT'S NOTHING, SIR... MERELY A MALFUNCTION. PAY IT NO MIND.
BUT--WHO IS THIS GIRL?
I... THINK SHE WAS A PASSENGER ON OUR LAST VOYAGE, SIR. BUT I DON'T--
...OBI-WAN KENOBI..
IS THERE ANY MORE TO THIS HOLOGRAM?
OUH-WHEET


ARTOO SAYS HE'S THE PROPERTY OF OBI-WAN KENOBI, AND IT IS A PRIVATE MESSAGE FOR HIM.
QUITE FRANKLY, SIR, I DON'T KNOW WHAT HE'S TALKING ABOUT! OUR LAST MASTER WAS CAPTAIN ANTILLIES...
I DON'T KNOW ANY OBI-WAN, BUT THERE'S AN OLD BEN KENOBI WHO LIVES OUT BEYOND THE DUNE SEA... SORT OF A HERMIT. I WONDER..
HMMM... I WONDER, IF I REMOVE THIS RESTRAINING BOLT...

NOW THE HOLOGRAM S DISAPPEARED, GIRL AND ALL!
I'M SORRY, SIR, BUT HE APPEARS TO HAVE PICKED UP A SLIGHT FLUTTER.
PLAY BACK THE ENTIRE MESSAGE, ARTOO!
PERHAPS LATER...!
MAKE HER COME BACK!
BOO BEEP BOO BEEP

SOON AFTERWARD, AT DINNER...
UNCLE OWEN--I THINK THAT R2 UNIT MAY BE STOLEN GOODS.
WHAT MAKES YOU THINK THAT, LUKE?
I STUMBLED ON A RECORDING WHILE I WAS CLEANING HIM...
THE DROID CLAIMS TO BE THE PROPERTY OF SOMEONE CALLED... OBI-WAN KENOBI!
!
I THOUGHT HE MIGHT MEAN OLD BEN--THE NAME IS SIMILAR. DO YOU KNOW WHAT--?
IT'S A NAME FROM ANOTHER TIME, THAT CAN ONLY MEAN TROUBLE!
YOU STAY AWAY FROM THAT OLD WIZARD, DO YOU HEAR ME? HE'S DANGEROUS!
TOMORROW, YOU'LL HAVE THAT R2 UNIT'S MEMORY FLUSHED AND THAT'LL BE THE END OF IT.
I DON'T CARE WHERE THAT DROID CAME FROM; IT BELONGS TO US NOW!
BUT, WHAT IF THIS OBI-WAN COMES LOOKING FOR THE DROID?
HE WON'T! HE DIED AT THE SAME TIME AS YOUR FATHER. FORGET ABOUT IT.
DID HE KNOW MY FATHER?
I SAID FORGET IT!
ALL RIGHT--BUT IF THESE NEW DROIDS WORK OUT, I'D LIKE TO TRANSMIT MY APPLICATION TO THE ACADAMY THIS YEAR.
YOU MEAN NEXT TERM--BEFORE THE HARVEST?
YOU'VE GOT MORE THAN ENOUGH DROIDS TO--
DROIDS CAN'T REPLACE YOU, LUKE! IT'S JUST FOR ONE MORE SEASON.
FOR THE FIRST TIME, WE'VE GOT A FORTUNE COMING INTO OUR HANDS. MAYBE AFTER NEXT SEASON...
BUT, THAT MEANS ANOTHER YEAR...
THE TIME WILL PASS BEFORE YOU KNOW IT.
THAT'S WHAT YOU SAID LAST YEAR--WHEN BIGGS AND TANK LEFT.
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
IT LOOKS LIKE I'M GOING NOWHERE!
I HAVE TO FINISH CLEANING THOSE DROIDS.
OWEN, WE CAN'T KEEP HIM HERE FOREVER! MOST OF HIS FRIENDS ARE GONE...
I'LL MAKE IT UP TO HIM NEXT YEAR ...I PROMISE.
LUKE'S JUST NOT A FARMER, OWEN. HE'S GOT TOO MUCH OF HIS FATHER IN HIM.
THAT'S... WHAT I'M AFRAID OF...!


THREEPIO! ARTOO! WHERE ARE YOU TWO?
THIS CONTROL BOX WILL POP YOU OUT INTO THE OPEN!
YIPE!
WHAT WERE YOU HIDING FOR? AND --WHERE'S ARTOO?
IT--WASN'T MY FAULT, SIR! PLEASE DON'T DEACTIVATE ME!
I TOLD HIM NOT TO GO, BUT HE'S FAULTY --MALFUNCTIONING.
KEPT BABBLING ON ABOUT HIS "MISSION"!
OH NO!
MOMENTS LATER, OUTSIDE...
NO SIGN OF HIM, EVEN WITH THESE ELECTRO-BINOCULARS!
UNCLE OWEN'S GOING TO KILL ME FOR THIS.
BEGGING YOUR PARDON, SIR...BUT CAN'T WE GO AFTER HIM?
NOT AT NIGHT! IT'S TOO DANGEROUS WITH ALL THE SANDPEOPLE AROUND. BUT, COME MORNING WE'LL--
LUKE! YOU ABOUT FINISHED WITH THOSE DROIDS?
BE THERE IN A MINUTE, UNCLE OWEN!
BOY, AM I IN FOR IT, IF HE FINDS OUT!
THAT LITTLE R2 DROID IS GOING TO GET ME INTO A LOT OF TROUBLE!
HE EXCELS AT THAT, SIR.
THESE ASTROID DROIDS ARE GETTING TOO MUCH FOR ME; EVEN I CAN'T UNDERSTAND THEIR LOGIC AT TIMES.
HOURS LATER, AS DAWN SLOWLY CREEPS OVER THE SPARSE BUT SPARKLING OASIS WHICH IS OWEN LAR'S HOMESTEAD...
BERU, HAVE YOU SEEN LUKE THIS MORNING?
HE GOT TO WORK EARLY--TOOK THE NEW DROIDS WITH HIM, I GUESS.
WELL, HE'D BETTER HAVE THOSE CONDENSING UNITS ON THE SOUTH RIDGE BY MIDDAY--OR THERE'LL BE HELL TO PAY!


MEANWHILE, SOME DISTANCE AWAY, FOUR IMPERIAL STORM-TROOPERS MILL ABOUT A FAMILIAR FORM: A HALF-BURIED LIFE-POD...!
THIS IS THE ONE! BUT, THERE ARE NO DATA TAPES HERE, SIR!
IF ONLY WE KNEW WHO WAS IN THAT POD WHEN IT--
HOLD IT!

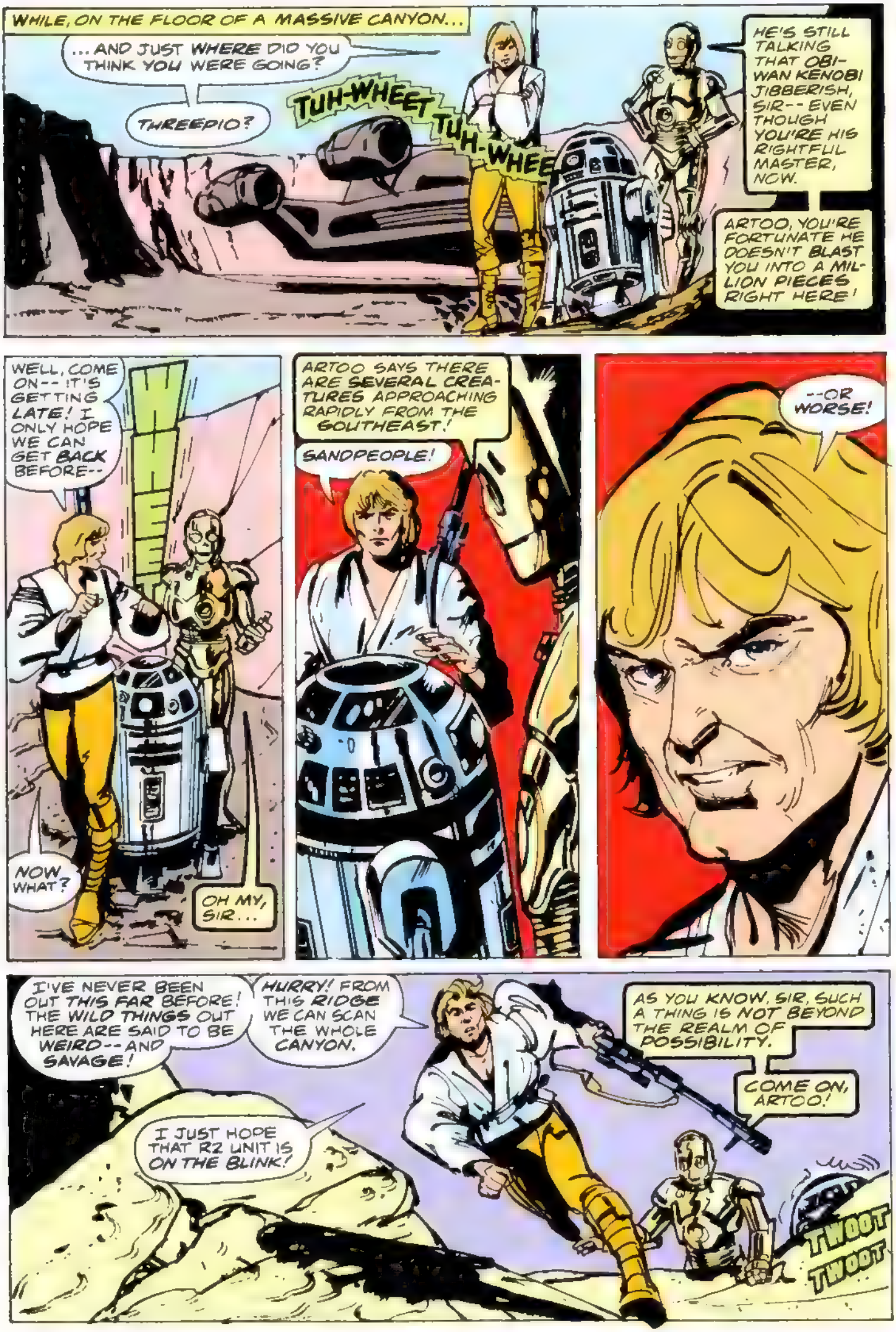
THIS SMALL PIECE OF METAL I FOUND IN THE SAND--!
DROIDS!

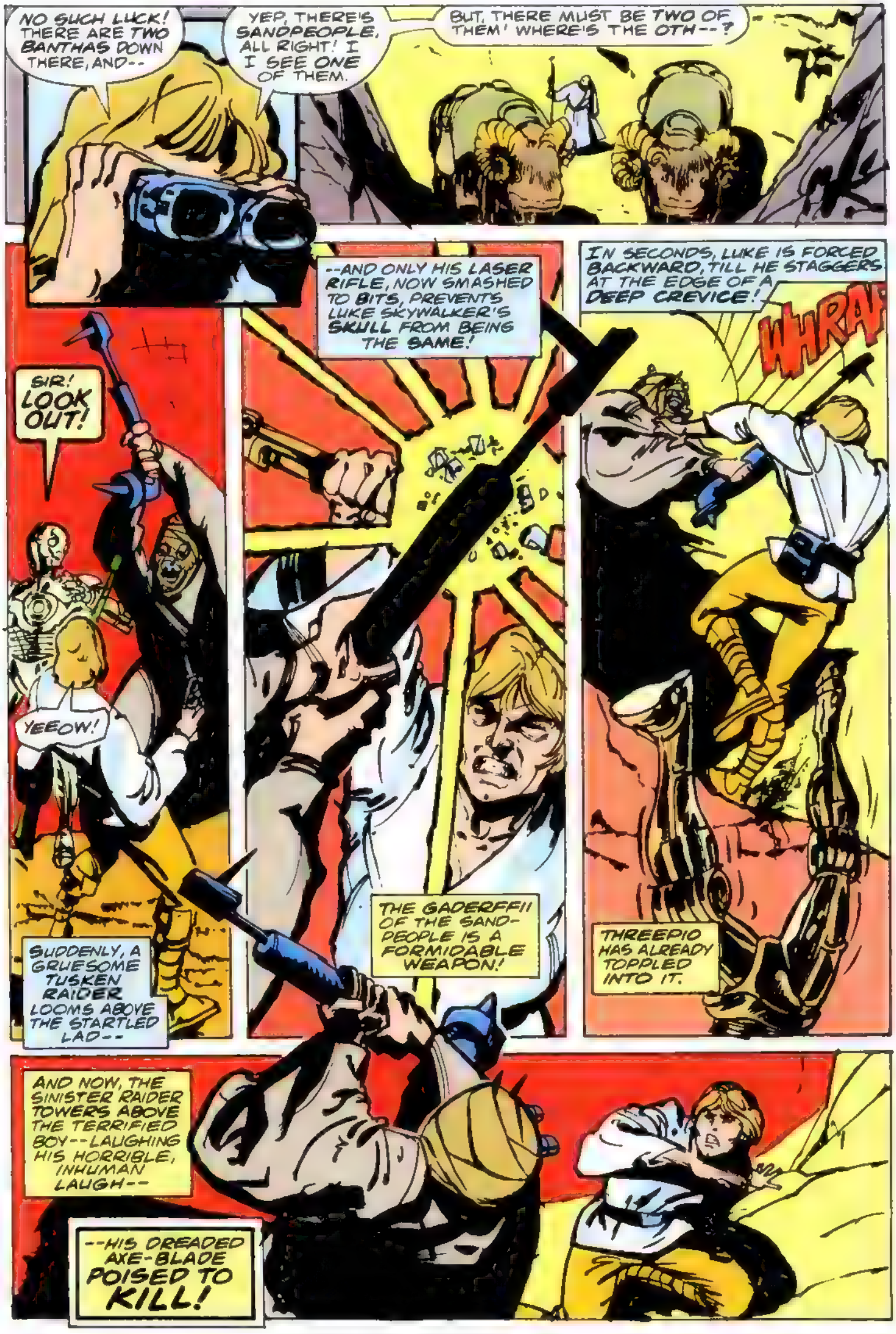
...OLD BEN KENOBI LIVES OUT IN THIS DIRECTION SOMEWHERE, THREEPIO...
BUT, I DON'T SEE HOW ARTOO COULD HAVE--

AS THE TINY LANDSPEEDER GLIDES ACROSS THE DESERT FLOOR, ITS OCCUPANTS ARE UNAWARE OF A DEADLY LASER RIFLE BEING AIMED AT THEM...
WAIT! THERE'S SOMETHING DEAD AHEAD ON THE SCANNER!
LOOKS LIKE OUR DROID! HIT IT, THREEPIO!
...AND OF ANOTHER'S HAND, WHICH GRASPS THE GUN BEFORE IT CAN BE FIRED!

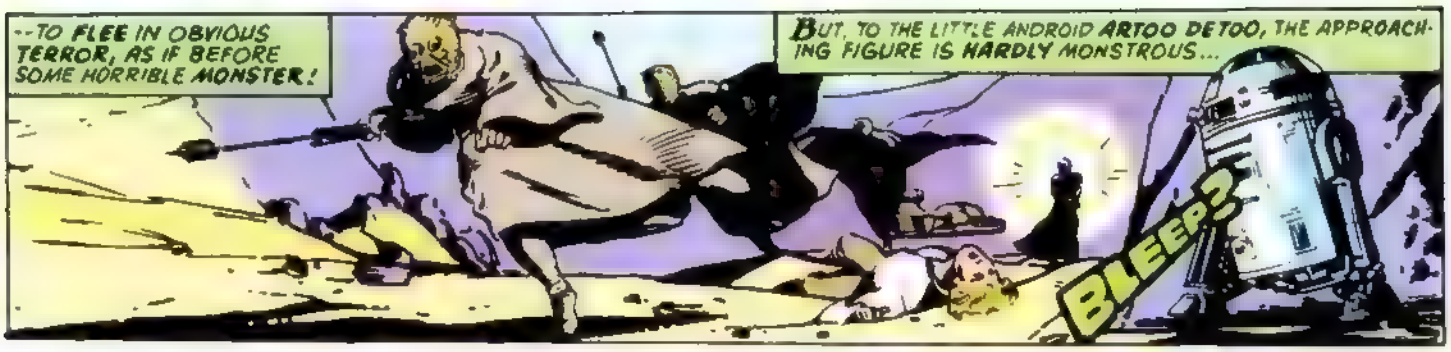
MOMENTS, LATER, FOLLOWING A HEATED ARGUMENT IN THEIR BARBARIC TONGUE, THE TWO SAND-PEOPLE--OR TUSKEN RAIDERS AS THEY'RE SOMETIMES CALLED--ARE SCURRYING OVER THE ROCKY TERRAIN...
...TOWARD THEIR TWO ENORMOUS BANTHAS, TETHERED NEARBY.

MOUNTING THE ELEPHANTINE CREATURES, THEY RIDE OFF DOWN THE RUGGED BLUFF --IN OMINOUS SILENCE.

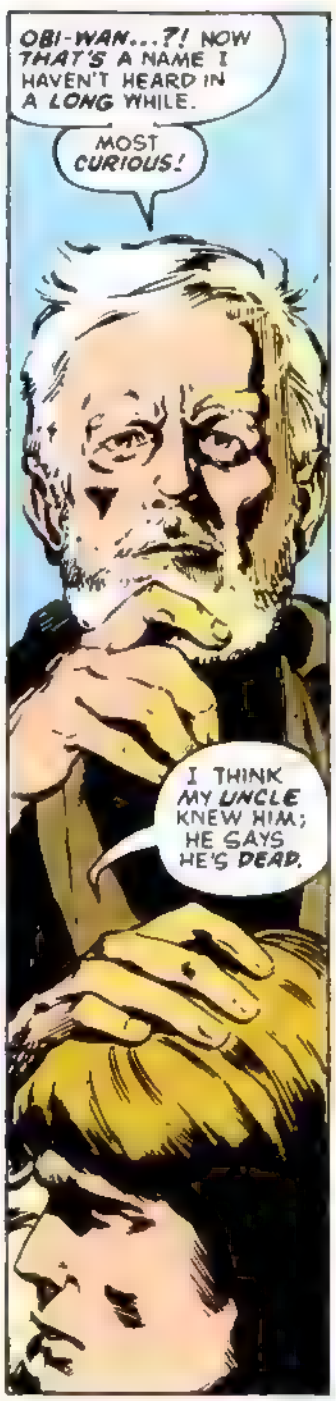

WHILE, ON THE FLOOR OF A MASSIVE CANYON...
...AND JUST WHERE DID YOU THINK YOU WERE GOING?
THREEPIO?
TUH-WHEET TUH-WHEET
HE'S STILL TALKING THAT OBI-WAN KENOBI JIBBERISH, SIR--EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE HIS RIGHTFUL MASTER, NOW.
ARTOO, YOU'RE FORTUNATE HE DOESN'T BLAST YOU INTO A MILLION PIECES RIGHT HERE!
WELL, COME ON--IT'S GETTING LATE! I ONLY HOPE WE CAN GET BACK BEFORE--
WHEET
NOW WHAT?
OH MY, SIR...
ARTOO SAYS THERE ARE SEVERAL CREATURES APPROACHING RAPIDLY FROM THE SOUTHEAST!
SANDPEOPLE!
--OR WORSE!
I'VE NEVER BEEN OUT THIS FAR BEFORE! THE WILD THINGS OUT HERE ARE SAID TO BE WEIRD--AND SAVAGE!
HURRY! FROM THIS RIDGE WE CAN SCAN THE WHOLE CANYON.
I JUST HOPE THAT R2 UNIT IS ON THE BLINK!
AS YOU KNOW, SIR, SUCH A THING IS NOT BEYOND THE REALM OF POSSIBILITY.
COME ON, ARTOO!
TWOOT TWOOT


NO SUCH LUCK! THERE ARE TWO BANTHAS DOWN THERE, AND--
YEP, THERE'S SANDPEOPLE, ALL RIGHT! I I SEE ONE OF THEM.
BUT, THERE MUST BE TWO OF THEM! WHERE'S THE OTH--?
--AND ONLY HIS LASER RIFLE, NOW SMASHED TO BITS, PREVENTS LUKE SKYWALKER'S SKULL FROM BEING THE SAME!
IN SECONDS, LUKE IS FORCED BACKWARD, TILL HE STAGGERS AT THE EDGE OF A DEEP CREVICE!
WHRA
SIR! LOOK OUT!
YEEOW!
SUDDENLY, A GRUESOME TUSKEN RAIDER LOOMS ABOVE THE STARTLED LAD--
THE GADERFFII OF THE SAND-PEOPLE IS A FORMIDABLE WEAPON!
THREEPIO HAS ALREADY TOPPLED INTO IT.
AND NOW, THE SINISTER RAIDER TOWERS ABOVE THE TERRIFIED BOY--LAUGHING HIS HORRIBLE, INHUMAN LAUGH--
--HIS DREADED AXE-BLADE POISED TO KILL!

AT THE LAST MOMENT, NOT EVEN BOTHERING TO KILL HIM, THE DESERT-DWELLING RAIDERS TURN THEIR ATTENTION TO LUKE'S LANDSPEEDER, WHEN SUDDENLY--
WHOOOOOOO
THEN, AS THE GREAT HOWLING-MOAN ECHOES EERILY THRU THE CANYON, THE SAND PEOPLE ABRUPTLY HALT THEIR RANSACKING--

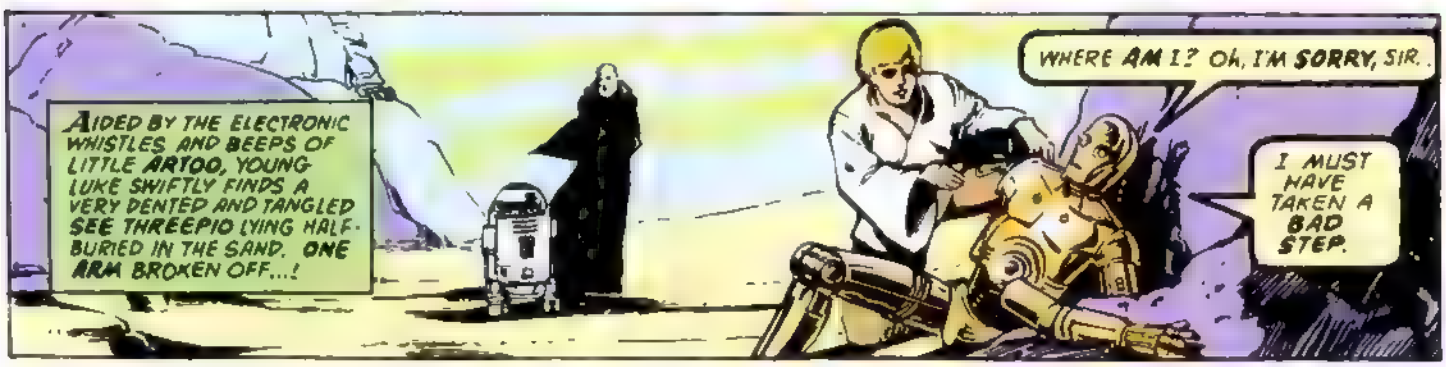

--TO FLEE IN OBVIOUS TERROR, AS IF BEFORE SOME HORRIBLE MONSTER!
BUT, TO THE LITTLE ANDROID ARTOO DETOO, THE APPROACHING FIGURE IS HARDLY MONSTROUS...
BLEEP?

. BUT ONLY A MAN, HIS ANCIENT LEATHERY FACE CRACKED AND WEATHERED BY EXOTIC CLIMATES.
DON'T WORRY, LITTLE DROID. HE'LL BE ALL RIGHT!
W-WHAT HAPPENED? I--BEN! BEN KENOBI--AM I GLAD TO SEE YOU!
WHAT BRINGS YOU OUT THIS FAR, LUKE?
THAT DROID OVER THERE--!
HE CLAIMS TO BE THE PROPERTY OF SOMEONE CALLED OBI-WAN KENOBI.

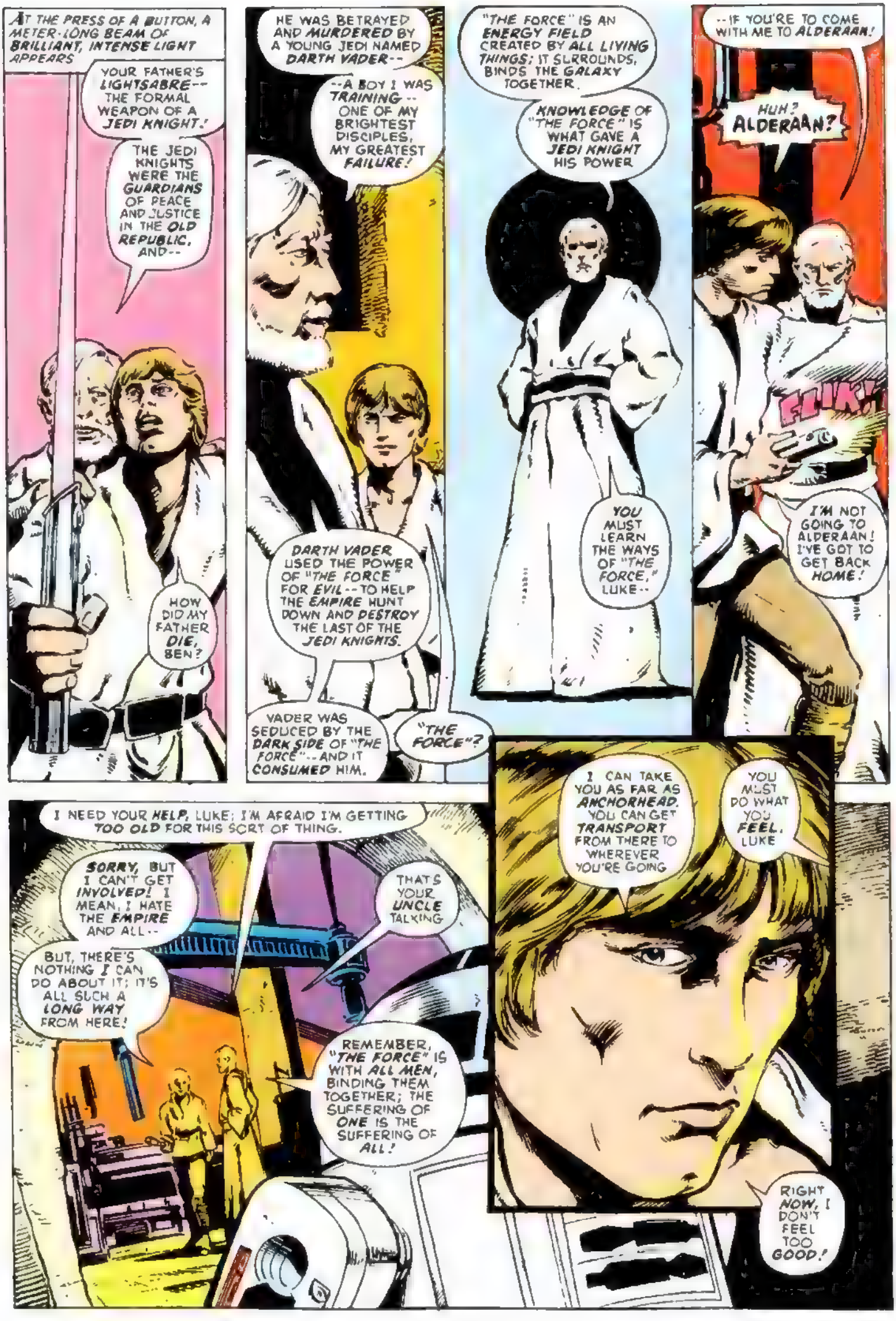

OBI-WAN...?! NOW THAT'S A NAME I HAVEN'T HEARD IN A LONG WHILE.
MOST CURIOUS!
I THINK MY UNCLE KNEW HIM; HE SAYS HE'S DEAD.

OH, HE'S NOT DEAD, NOT YET NOT YET, HE'S ME!
BUT I HAVEN'T GONE BY THE NAME OBI-WAN SINCE BEFORE YOU WERE BORN
THEN THIS DROID DOES BELONG TO YOU, AS IT CLAIMS?
CAN'T REMEMBER EVER OWNING A DROID.
BLEET BLEET

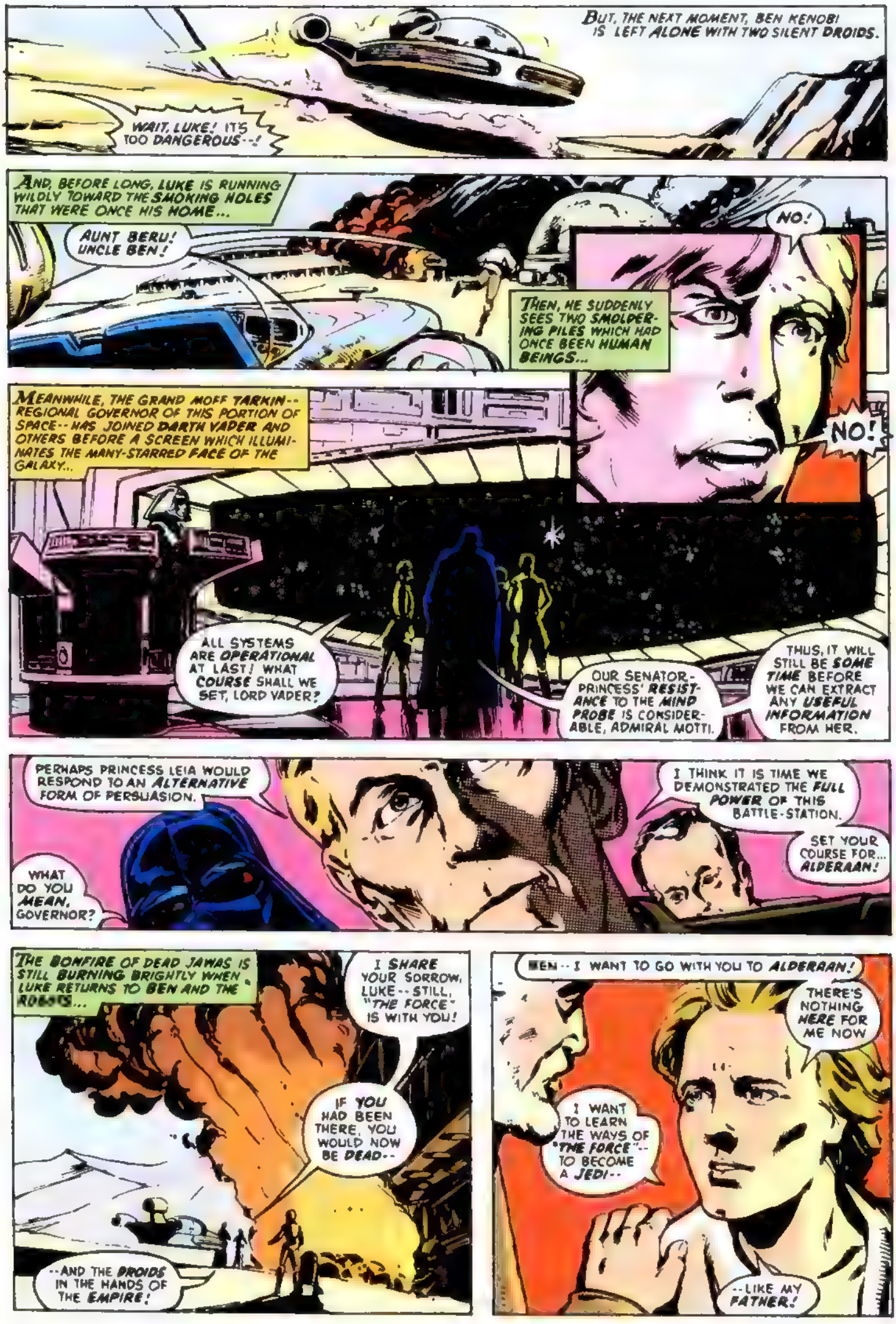
MOST INTERESTING! BUT WE'D BEST GET INSIDE, BEFORE THE SANDPEOPLE RETURN IN GREATER NUMBERS.
ALL RIGHT BUT I--THREEPIO!
WHERE'S MY UNCLE'S OTHER DROID?
PUH-WHEE!


AIDED BY THE ELECTRONIC WHISTLES AND BEEPS OF LITTLE ARTOO, YOUNG LUKE SWIFTLY FINDS A VERY DENTED AND TANGLED SEE THREEPIO LYING HALF-BURIED IN THE SAND. ONE ARM BROKEN OFF...!
WHERE AM I? OH, I'M SORRY, SIR..
I MUST HAVE TAKEN A BAD STEP.

QUICKLY, SON! THEY'RE ON THE MOVE!
SOON, IN BEN KENOBI'S SMALL BUT HOMEY HOVEL...
NOW, LITTLE FRIEND, LET'S SEE IF WE CAN'T FIND WHAT YOU ARE--
--AND WHERE YOU CAME FROM!
I SAW PART OF A HOLOGRAPHIC MESSAGE THAT HE--
I SEEM TO HAVE FOUND IT.
GENERAL OBI-WAN KENOBI-- I PRESENT MYSELF IN THE NAME OF MY FATHER, BAIL ANTILLIES, VICEROY OF ALDERAAN.
YEARS AGO, COMMANDER, YOU SERVED THE OLD REPUBLIC IN THE CLONE WARS; NOW, MY FATHER BEGS YOU TO AID US AGAIN IN OUR MOST DESPERATE HOUR.
INFORMATION VITAL TO THE SURVIVAL OF THE REBEL ALLIANCE HAS BEEN PLACED IN THIS DROID.
PLEASE SEE THIS R2 UNIT DELIVERED SAFELY TO ALDERAAN! YOU ARE OUR LAST HOPE ::
MY MISSION TO YOU HAS FAILED, AND I SHALL BE CAPTURED.
WHOEVER SHE IS-- SHE'S TERRIFIC!
SHE CALLED YOU-- COMMANDER? YOU FOUGHT IN THE CLONE WARS?
OH YES. I WAS ONCE A JEDI KNIGHT-- JUST LIKE YOUR FATHER!
JEDI KNIGHT? MY FATHER WAS JUST A NAVIGATOR ON A SPICE FREIGHTER--!
SO YOUR UNCLE TOLD YOU.
YOUR UNCLE OWEN DIDN'T AGREE WITH YOUR FATHER'S IDEALS-- THOUGHT HE SHOULD HAVE STAYED HERE ON TATOOINE, AND NOT GOTTEN INVOLVED.
HE WAS ALWAYS AFRAID YOUR FATHER'S ADVENTURES MIGHT INFLUENCE YOU.
I WISH I'D KNOWN MY FATHER.
THAT REMINDS ME: I HAVE SOMETHING HERE FOR YOU.
YOUR FATHER WANTED YOU TO HAVE THIS-- WHEN YOU WERE OLD ENOUGH
WHAT IS IT?
TOUCH THE BRIGHTLY-COLORED BUTTON UP THERE BY THE POMMEL-- AND YOU'LL SEE!


AT THE PRESS OF A BUTTON, A METER-LONG BEAM OF BRILLIANT, INTENSE LIGHT APPEARS
YOUR FATHER'S LIGHTSABRE--THE FORMAL WEAPON OF A JEDI KNIGHT.
THE JEDI KNIGHTS WERE THE GUARDIANS OF PEACE AND JUSTICE IN THE OLD REPUBLIC, AND--
HOW DID MY FATHER DIE, BEN?
HE WAS BETRAYED AND MURDERED BY A YOUNG JEDI NAMED DARTH VADER--
--A BOY I WAS TRAINING--ONE OF MY BRIGHTEST DISCIPLES, MY GREATEST FAILURE!
DARTH VADER USED THE POWER OF "THE FORCE" FOR EVIL--TO HELP THE EMPIRE HUNT DOWN AND DESTROY THE LAST OF THE JEDI KNIGHTS.
VADER WAS SEDUCED BY THE DARK SIDE OF "THE FORCE"--AND IT CONSUMED HIM.
"THE FORCE"?
"THE FORCE" IS AN ENERGY FIELD CREATED BY ALL LIVING THINGS; IT SURROUNDS, BINDS THE GALAXY TOGETHER.
KNOWLEDGE OF "THE FORCE" IS WHAT GAVE A JEDI KNIGHT HIS POWER
YOU MUST LEARN THE WAYS OF "THE FORCE," LUKE--
--IF YOU'RE TO COME WITH ME TO ALDERAAN!
HUH? ALDERAAN?
FLIK!
I'M NOT GOING TO ALDERAAN! I'VE GOT TO GET BACK HOME!
I NEED YOUR HELP, LUKE; I'M AFRAID I'M GETTING TOO OLD FOR THIS SORT OF THING.
SORRY, BUT I CAN'T GET INVOLVED! I MEAN, I HATE THE EMPIRE AND ALL--
BUT, THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO ABOUT IT; IT'S ALL SUCH A LONG WAY FROM HERE!
THAT'S YOUR UNCLE TALKING
REMEMBER, "THE FORCE" IS WITH ALL MEN, BINDING THEM TOGETHER; THE SUFFERING OF ONE IS THE SUFFERING OF ALL!
I CAN TAKE YOU AS FAR AS ANCHORHEAD. YOU CAN GET TRANSPORT FROM THERE TO WHEREVER YOU'RE GOING
YOU MUST DO WHAT YOU FEEL, LUKE
RIGHT NOW, I DON'T FEEL TOO GOOD!

MEANWHILE, ABOARD THE EMPIRE BATTLE-STATION KNOWN AS DEATH STAR...
DARTH VADER!
NOW, YOUR HIGHNESS...
.. WE WILL DISCUSS THE LOCATION OF THE HIDDEN REBEL BASE.
AS THE CELL DOOR SLIDES ELECTRONICALLY SHUT, THE FEARFUL SCREAMS OF PRINCESS LEIA ARE SCARCELY HEARD IN THE CORRIDOR OUTSIDE.
WHILE, ON TATOOINE:
LOOK, BEN--
THERE'S WHAT'S LEFT OF THE JAWA SANDCRAWLER THAT STOPPED BY UNCLE OWEN'S PLACE YESTERDAY!
ALL THE JAWAS--DEAD! LOOKS LIKE THE SANDPEOPLE DID IT ALL RIGHT! THERE'S BANTHA TRACKS--AND PART OF THOSE GAFFI STICKS.
BUT, WE NEVER HEARD OF THEM HITTING SOMETHING THIS BIG!
THEY DIDN'T, LUKE BUT WE WERE MEANT TO THINK SO.
LOOK AT THESE BLAST POINTS! ONLY IMPERIAL STORMTROOPERS ARE THIS PRECISE
THESE ARE THE SAME JAWAS WHO SOLD US ARTOO AND THREEPIO.
THE TROOPERS MUST HAVE BEEN LOOKING FOR ARTOO--BECAUSE OF THE PRINCESS' MESSAGE!
IF THEY TRACKED THE ROBOTS TO THE JAWAS, THEY MAY HAVE LEARNED WHO THEY SOLD THEM TO
AND THAT WILL LEAD THEM BACK--
--HOME!

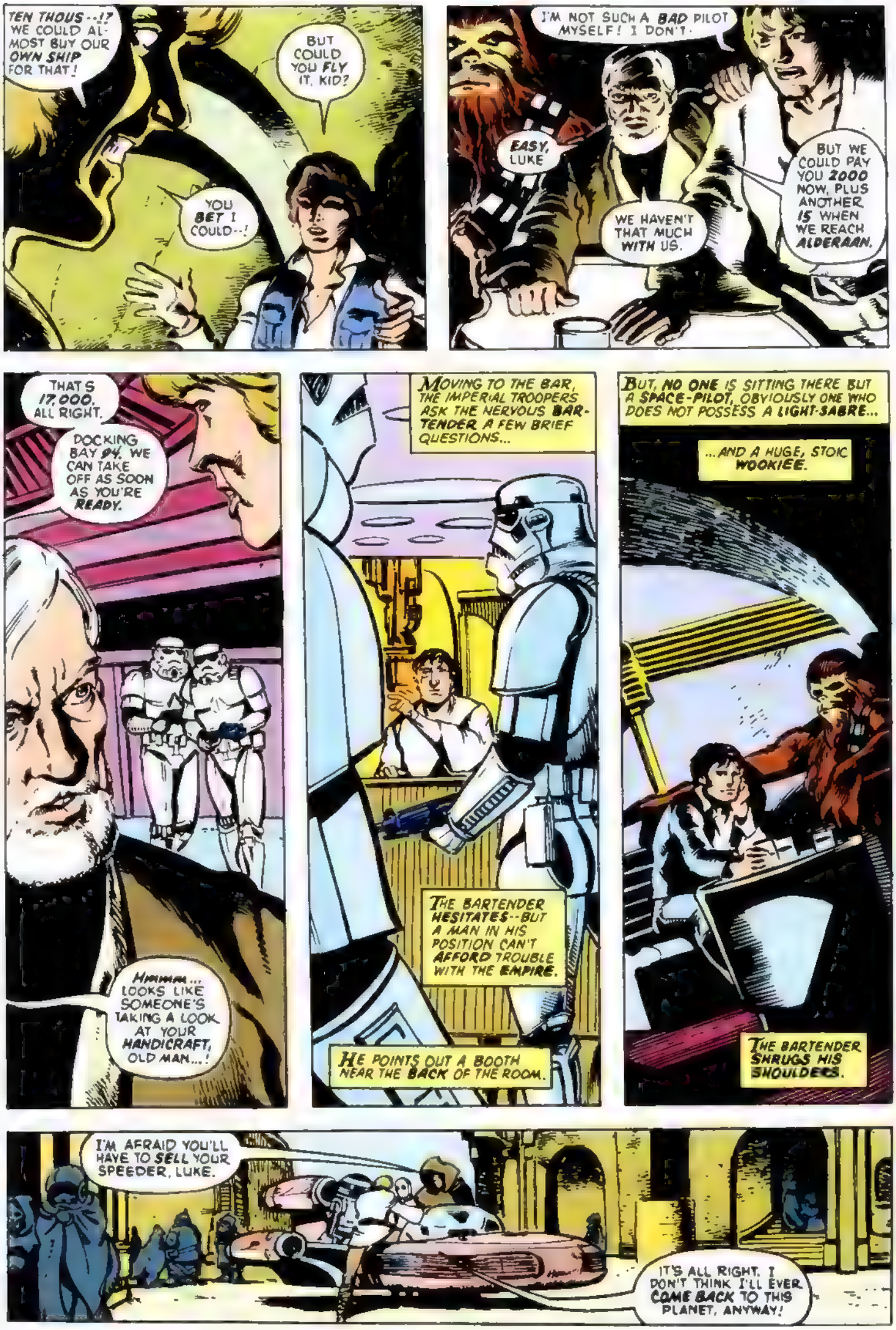

BUT, THE NEXT MOMENT, BEN KENOBI IS LEFT ALONE WITH TWO SILENT DROIDS.
WAIT, LUKE! IT'S TOO DANGEROUS--!
AND, BEFORE LONG, LUKE IS RUNNING WILDLY TOWARD THE SMOKING HOLES THAT WERE ONCE HIS HOME...
AUNT BERU! UNCLE BEN!
NO!
THEN, HE SUDDENLY SEES TWO SMOLDERING PILES WHICH HAD ONCE BEEN HUMAN BEINGS...
NO!
MEANWHILE, THE GRAND MOFF TARKIN--REGIONAL GOVERNOR OF THIS PORTION OF SPACE--HAS JOINED DARTH VADER AND OTHERS BEFORE A SCREEN WHICH ILLUMINATES THE MANY-STARRED FACE OF THE GALAXY...
ALL SYSTEMS ARE OPERATIONAL AT LAST! WHAT COURSE SHALL WE SET, LORD VADER?
OUR SENATOR-PRINCESS' RESISTANCE TO THE MIND PROBE IS CONSIDERABLE, ADMIRAL MOTTI.
THUS, IT WILL STILL BE SOME TIME BEFORE WE CAN EXTRACT ANY USEFUL INFORMATION FROM HER.
PERHAPS PRINCESS LEIA WOULD RESPOND TO AN ALTERNATIVE FORM OF PERSUASION.
I THINK IT IS TIME WE DEMONSTRATED THE FULL POWER OF THIS BATTLE-STATION.
SET YOUR COURSE FOR... ALDERAAN!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, GOVERNOR?
THE BONFIRE OF DEAD JAWAS IS STILL BURNING BRIGHTLY WHEN LUKE RETURNS TO BEN AND THE ROBOTS...
I SHARE YOUR SORROW, LUKE--STILL, "THE FORCE" IS WITH YOU!
IF YOU HAD BEEN THERE, YOU WOULD NOW BE DEAD--
--AND THE DROIDS IN THE HANDS OF THE EMPIRE!
BEN--I WANT TO GO WITH YOU TO ALDERAAN!
THERE'S NOTHING HERE FOR ME NOW
I WANT TO LEARN THE WAYS OF "THE FORCE"--TO BECOME A JEDI--
--LIKE MY FATHER!

LATER, THE SPEEDER BUMPS TO A HALT IN MOS EISLEY SPACEPORT...
WELL, HERE IT IS, LAD
YOU WON'T FIND A MORE WRETCHED HIVE OF VILLAINY!
UH OH! HERE COME SOME IMPERIAL TROOPERS...!
YOU! HOW LONG HAVE YOU HAD THESE DROIDS?
Er uh..
DO YOU COME FROM THE SOUTH?
LET US SEE YOUR IDENTIFICATION!
YES, ALL RIGHT, I--
ABRUPTLY, BEN KENOBI INTERRUPTS IN A STRANGELY CONTROLLED VOICE...
YOU DON'T NEED TO SEE HIS IDENTIFICATION
WE DON'T NEED TO SEE HIS IDENTIFICATION.
THESE AREN'T THE DROIDS YOU'RE LOOKING FOR.
THESE AREN'T THE DROIDS WE'RE LOOKING FOR.
HE CAN GO ON ABOUT HIS BUSINESS.
HE CAN GO ON ABOUT HIS BUSINESS.
I CAN'T UNDERSTAND HOW WE GOT BY THOSE TROOPERS! I THOUGHT WE WERE DEAD!
"THE FORCE" IS A STRONG INFLUENCE ON THE MIND... A POWERFUL ALLY...
..THOUGH YOU WILL DISCOVER IT CAN ALSO BE A DANGER.
DO YOU REALLY THINK WE CAN FIND A PILOT WHO'LL TAKE US TO ALDERAAN-- IN THIS CANTINA?
MOST OF THE GOOD FREIGHTER PILOTS FREQUENT HERE-- BUT WATCH YOUR STEP.
THIS PLACE CAN BE A LITTLE ROUGH.

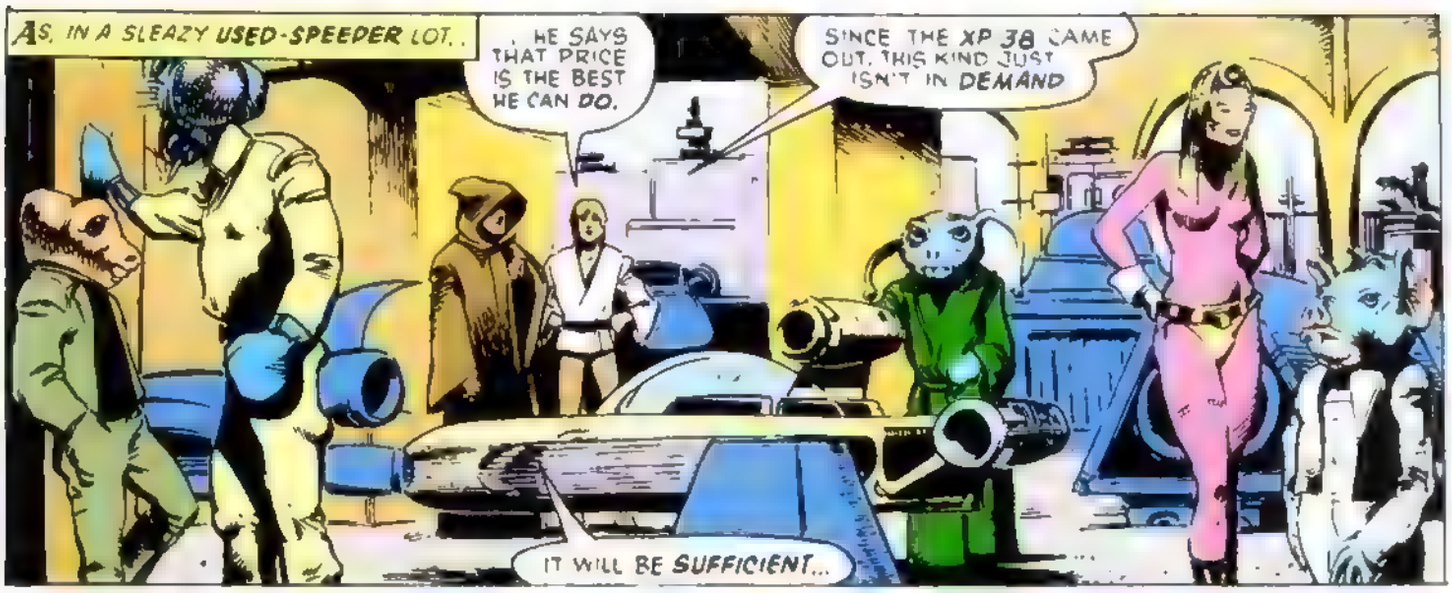
WITHIN MOMENTS, YOUNG LUKE FINDS OUT WHAT HE MEANT...
NEGOLA DEWAGHI WOOL-DUGGER?!?
Huh--?
HE DOESN'T LIKE YOU.
I'M SORRY...
I DON'T LIKE YOU EITHER!
KATURA VESHTAT! SHADRAAK!
I'M AFRAID I STILL DON'T--
DON'T INSULT US! WE HAVE THE DEATH SENTENCE ON TWELVE SYSTEMS!
MANDYSH MAKORA!
GENTLEMEN! THIS LITTLE ONE ISN'T WORTH THE EFFORT.
COME, LET ME BUY YOU A--
NEGOLA DEWAGHI WOOL-DUGGER?!?
THLAP
UNNFF--!
THEN, AS THE BAD-TEMPERED ALIEN DRAWS A PISTOL--
--AND WHILE THE BARTENDER IS STILL YELLING "NO BLASTERS!"--
--BEN'S OWN LIGHTSABRE COMES SUDDENLY TO LIFE--
GNNG
FZZT!
--AND A WIDE-EYED LUKE SKYWALKER IS ABRUPTLY REMINDED THAT OLD BEN KENOBI WAS ONCE OBI-WAN KENOBI--
--A JEDI KNIGHT!

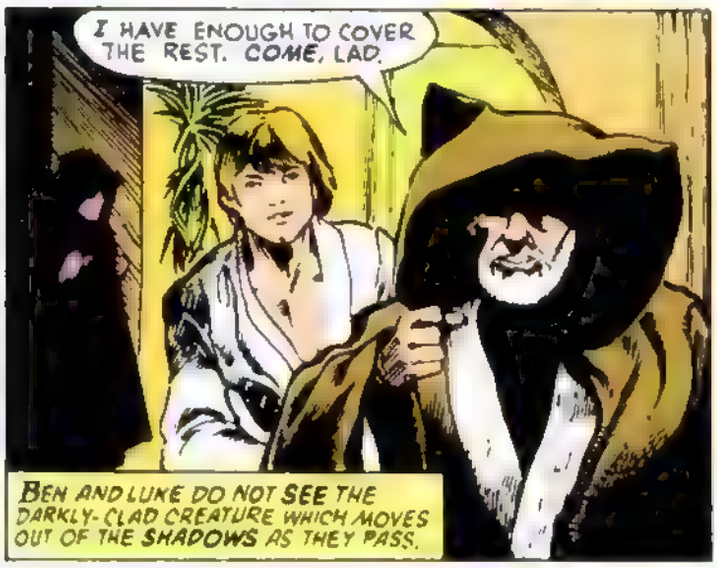
ONLY WHEN THE TWO AGGRESSORS LIE IN SECTIONS ON THE FLOOR DOES THE OLD MAN'S BODY APPEAR TO RELAX. OR THE SUGGESTION OF A SIGH ESCAPE HIM.
IN A MIXED STATE OF SHOCK AND ADMIRATION, LUKE SKYWALKER STANDS SPEECHLESS!
THEN, WITH A SHUFFLING AND A MANY-TONGUED MUTTERING THE CANTINA RETURNS TO ITS FORMER STATE...SAVE THAT BEN KENOBI IS GIVEN A RESPECTFUL AMOUNT OF SPACE AT THE BAR.
THE WHOLE AFFAIR HAS LASTED ONLY A FEW SECONDS.
THEN, AS IF NOTHING HAS HAPPENED, BEN SPEAKS...
LUKE...
...THIS IS CHEWBACCA. HE'S A WOOKIEE.
LUKE HAS HEARD ABOUT WOOKIEES. BUT HE NEVER EXPECTED TO SEE ONE, LET ALONE MEET ONE
GRONK
DESPITE A COMICAL, QUASI-MONKEY FACE, THE SEVEN-FOOT ANTHROPOID IS ANYTHING- BUT GENTLE-LOOKING... NOR DOES ITS DEEP-THROATED, UNINTELLIGIBLE RESPONSE EASE LUKE'S MIND MUCH:

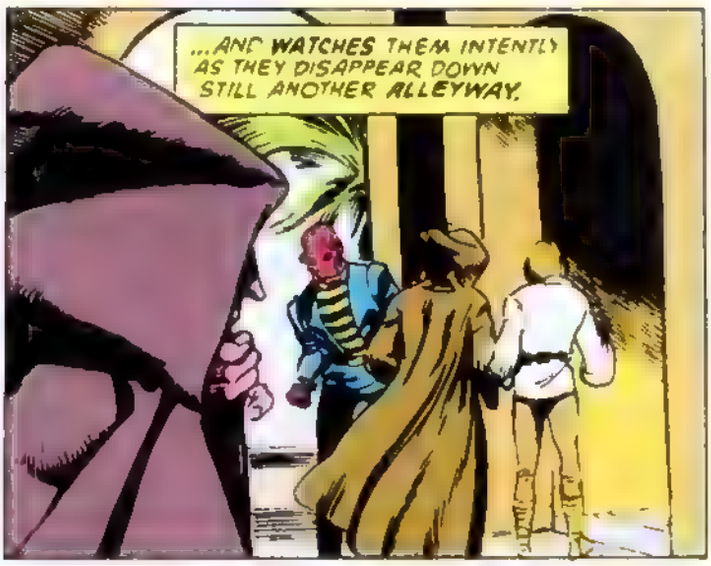
NEITHER DO BEN KENOBI'S NEXT WORDS:
HE'S FIRST MATE ON A SHIP THAT MIGHT SUIT OUR NEEDS.
THAT'S... WONDERFUL.
WHILE, OUTSIDE IN THE STREET...
WHAT COULD BE TAKING THEM SO LONG?
LOOK! HERE COMES A PATRON OUT OF THE CANTINA!
BEEP
NOW HE'S APPROACHING THOSE TWO IMPERIAL TROOPERS.
I DON'T LIKE THE LOOKS OF THIS, ARTOO.
INSIDE, THE GIANT WOOKIEE ESCORTS BEN AND LUKE TO A SECLUDED CORNER...
YOU'RE PRETTY HANDY WITH THAT SABRE, OLD MAN.
I'M HAN SOLO, CAPTAIN OF THE MILLENNIUM FALCON; CHEWIE TELLS ME YOU'RE LOOKING FOR PASSAGE TO THE ALDERAAN SYSTEM.
IF IT'S A FAST SHIP.
FAST SHIP? YOU MEAN YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF THE MILLENIUM FALCON?
SHOULD I?
IT'S THE SHIP THAT MADE THE KESSEL RUN IN LESS THAN 12 PAR-SECS!
I'VE OUTRUN IMPERIAL STARSHIPS -- NOT THE LOCAL BULK-CRUISERS, MIND YOU-- THESE ARE THE BIG CORELLIAN SHIPS I'M TALKING ABOUT.
I THINK SHE'S FAST ENOUGH FOR YOU, OLD MAN.
WHAT'S THE CARGO?
JUST MYSELF, THE BOY, AND TWO DROIDS -- WITH NO QUESTIONS.
NO QUESTIONS. LOCAL TROUBLE?
LET'S JUST SAY WE'D LIKE TO AVOID ANY IMPERIAL ENTANGLEMENTS.
THESE DAYS, THAT CAN BE A REAL TRICK.
TEN THOUSAND-- IN ADVANCE.

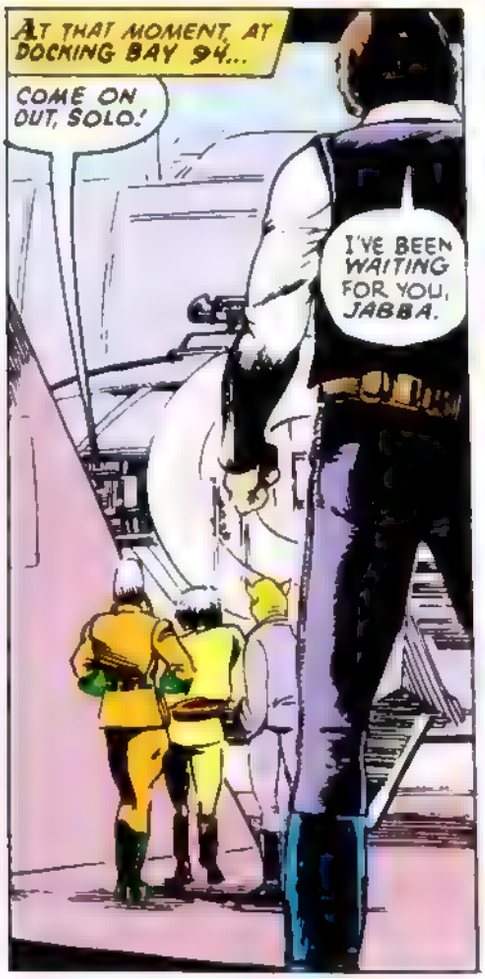

TEN THOUS--!? WE COULD ALMOST BUY OUR OWN SHIP FOR THAT!
BUT COULD YOU FLY IT, KID?
YOU BET I COULD--!
I'M NOT SUCH A BAD PILOT MYSELF! I DON'T-
EASY, LUKE
WE HAVEN'T THAT MUCH WITH US.
BUT WE COULD PAY YOU 2000 NOW, PLUS ANOTHER 15 WHEN WE REACH ALDERAAN.
THAT'S 17,000, ALL RIGHT.
DOCKING BAY 94. WE CAN TAKE OFF AS SOON AS YOU'RE READY.
HMMMM... LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE'S TAKING A LOOK AT YOUR HANDICRAFT, OLD MAN...!
MOVING TO THE BAR, THE IMPERIAL TROOPERS ASK THE NERVOUS BARTENDER A FEW BRIEF QUESTIONS...
THE BARTENDER HESITATES--BUT A MAN IN HIS POSITION CAN'T AFFORD TROUBLE WITH THE EMPIRE.
HE POINTS OUT A BOOTH NEAR THE BACK OF THE ROOM.
BUT, NO ONE IS SITTING THERE BUT A SPACE-PILOT, OBVIOUSLY ONE WHO DOES NOT POSSESS A LIGHT-SABRE...
...AND A HUGE, STOIC WOOKIEE.
THE BARTENDER SHRUGS HIS SHOULDERS.
I'M AFRAID YOU'LL HAVE TO SELL YOUR SPEEDER, LUKE.
IT'S ALL RIGHT, I DON'T THINK I'LL EVER COME BACK TO THIS PLANET, ANYWAY!

MEANWHILE THE IMPERIAL TROOPERS HAVE WANDERED ON··BUT, JUST AS HAN SOLO STARTS TO SLIDE FROM HIS BOOTH..
GOING SOMEWHERE, SOLO?
MATTER OF FACT, I WAS JUST GOING TO SEE YOUR BOSS. TELL JABBA I HAVE HIS MONEY.
THAT'S WHAT YOU SAID YESTERDAY. NOW IT'S TOO LATE.
BUT I'VE REALLY GOT THE MONEY THIS TIME!
THEN HAND IT OVER.
I HAVEN'T GOT IT ON ME
YOU TELL JABBA··
JABBA WOULD RATHER HAVE YOUR SHIP, I THINK
OVER MY DEAD BODY!
THAT'S THE IDEA, SOLO
NOW, WILL YOU COME OUTSIDE WITH ME, OR MUST I FINISH IT H··
SORRY FOR THE MESS.


AS, IN A SLEAZY USED-SPEEDER LOT..
. HE SAYS THAT PRICE IS THE BEST HE CAN DO.
SINCE THE XP 38 CAME OUT, THIS KIND JUST ISN'T IN DEMAND
IT WILL BE SUFFICIENT...

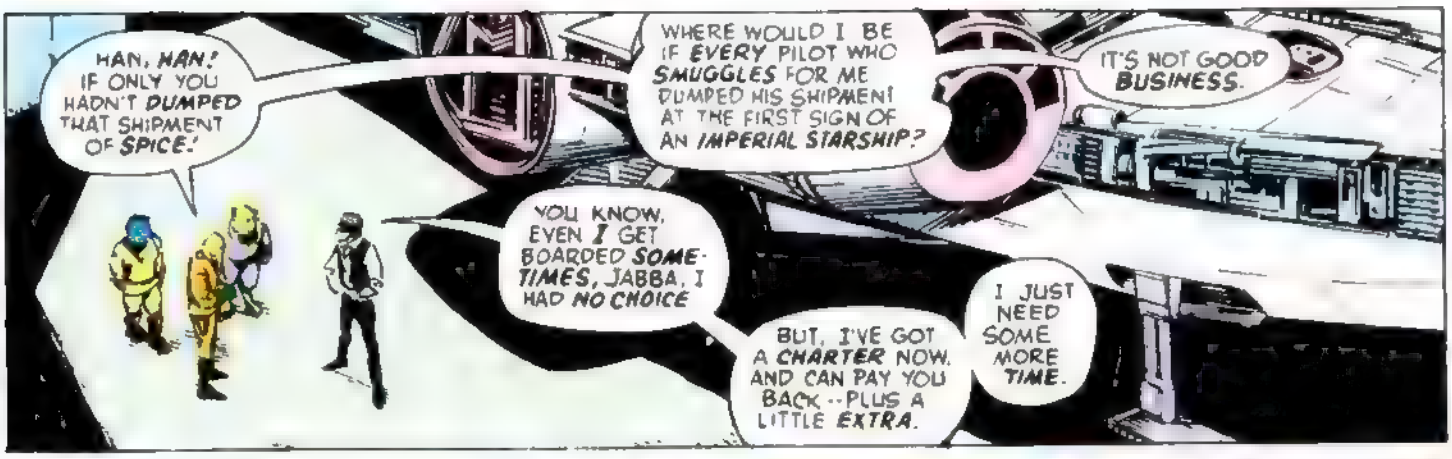

I HAVE ENOUGH TO COVER THE REST. COME, LAD.
BEN AND LUKE DO NOT SEE THE DARKLY-CLAD CREATURE WHICH MOVES OUT OF THE SHADOWS AS THEY PASS.


...AND WATCHES THEM INTENTLY AS THEY DISAPPEAR DOWN STILL ANOTHER ALLEYWAY.


AT THAT MOMENT, AT DOCKING BAY 94...
COME ON OUT, SOLO!
I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU, JABBA.

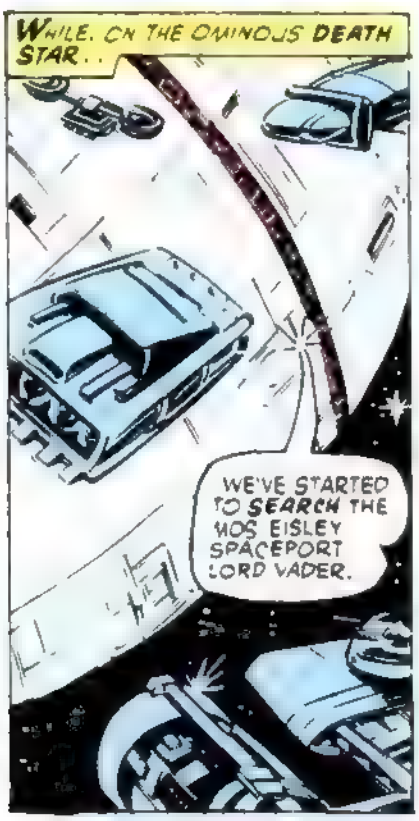
HAN, MY BOY-- THERE ARE TIMES WHEN YOU DIS-APPOINT ME.
WHY HAVEN'T YOU PAID ME?
AND WHY DID YOU HAVE TO FRY POOR GREEDO LIKE THAT-- AFTER ALL WE'VE BEEN THRU TOGETHER?

JABBA, THE NEXT TIME YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING TO SAY TO ME DON'T SEND ONE OF YOUR BLASTER-HAPPY TWERPS.
COME SEE ME YOURSELF.


HAN, HAN! IF ONLY YOU HADN'T DUMPED THAT SHIPMENT OF SPICE!
WHERE WOULD I BE IF EVERY PILOT WHO SMUGGLES FOR ME DUMPED HIS SHIPMENT AT THE FIRST SIGN OF AN IMPERIAL STARSHIP?
IT'S NOT GOOD BUSINESS.
YOU KNOW, EVEN I GET BOARDED SOMETIMES, JABBA. I HAD NO CHOICE
BUT, I'VE GOT A CHARTER NOW. AND CAN PAY YOU BACK--PLUS A LITTLE EXTRA.
I JUST NEED SOME MORE TIME.

PUT YOUR BLASTERS AWAY MEN!
HAN, MY BOY, I AM ONLY DOING THIS BECAUSE YOU'RE THE BEST, AND I NEED YOU.
BUT, IF YOU DISAPPOINT ME AGAIN, I'LL PUT A PRICE ON YOUR HEAD SO LARGE--

--THAT YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO GO NEAR A CIVILIZED SYSTEM AGAIN FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE!
I'LL PAY YOU, JABBA, BUT NOT BECAUSE YOU THREATEN ME.
I'LL PAY YOU BECAUSE IT'S MY PLEASURE.

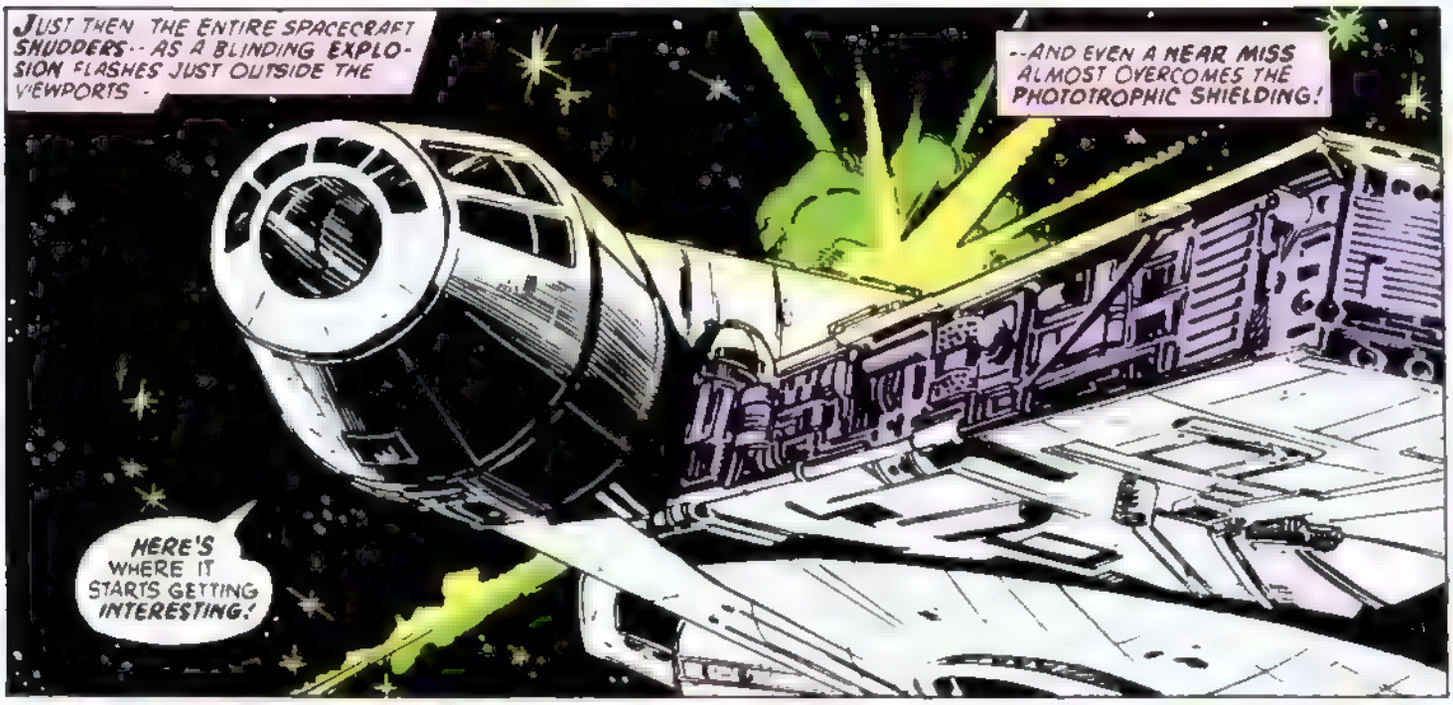

WHILE, ON THE OMINOUS DEATH STAR...
WE'VE STARTED TO SEARCH THE MOS EISLEY SPACEPORT LORD VADER.

IT'S JUST A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE WE FIND THE DROIDS!
SEND IN MORE MEN IF YOU HAVE TO!
IT'S HER HOPE OF THAT DATA BEING USED AGAINST US THAT ENABLES PRINCESS LEIA TO RESIST THE MIND PROBE.

WHEN SHE KNOWS IT HAS BEEN DESTROYED, ONCE AND FOR ALL--SHE WILL BREAK!

AT THIS VERY MOMENT, BACK ON TATOOINE, YOUNG LUKE SKYWALKER IS VOICING HIS FIRST OPINION OF THE MILLENNIUM FALCON...
WHAT A PIECE OF JUNK!
THIS SHIP COULDN'T POSSIBLY GO ABOVE SUB-LIGHT SPEEDS!
SHE MAY NOT LOOK LIKE MUCH, BUT SHE'S GOT IT WHERE IT COUNTS...
I'VE ADDED SOME SPECIAL MODIFICATIONS MYSELF
SHE'LL MAKE POINT FIVE BEYOND LIGHT SPEED, AND--
Uh oh! WE'RE A LITTLE RUSHED--
FZZAP
SO, IF YOU FOLKS DON'T MIND HURRYING ABOARD--
ZZRAK!
FTIK
FTIK
--WE'LL BE OFF!
GET US OUT OF HERE!
CHEWIE!
DEFLECTOR SHIELD, QUICK!
GRUNK

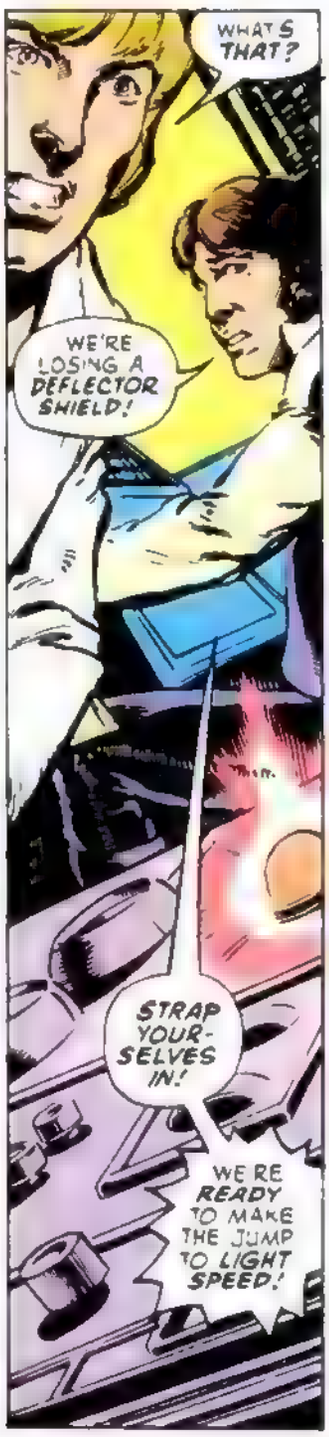
ALMOST THE NEXT MOMENT, THE MOTLEY DENIZENS OF MOS EISLEY LOOK UP, AND MURMUR AMONG THEMSELVES IN A MULTITUDE OF INHUMAN LANGUAGES.
IT WOULD APPEAR THE MILLENNIUM FALCON IS OFF FOR ANOTHER RUN.
YET, ALMOST AS QUICKLY AS THEY CAN BE NOTICED ON SOLO'S RADAR-SCOPE, A TRIO OF IMPERIAL STARDESTROYERS APPEAR, AS IF FROM NOWHERE...
OUR PASSENGERS MUST BE HOTTER THAN I THOUGHT, CHEWIE!
--GIANT STARSHIPS WHICH, THOUGH STILL FAR IN THE DISTANCE, ARE FULLY 100 TIMES THE SIZE OF THE FLEEING FALCON--
--WITH A FIREPOWER WHICH DWARFS THE SMALLER SHIP'S NEARLY TO THE POINT OF THE INFINITESIMAL!
STAY SHARP!
TWO OF THEM ARE TRYING TO CUT US OFF.
KRONK
CAN'T YOU OUTRUN THEM? I THOUGHT YOU SAID THIS THING WAS FAST!
WATCH YOUR MOUTH, KID, OR YOU'LL FIND YOURSELF FLOATING HOME.
WE'LL BE SAFE ENOUGH, ONCE WE'VE MADE THE JUMP INTO HYPERSPACE.
PLUS, I KNOW A FEW MANEUVERS THAT SHOULD LOSE THEM...!

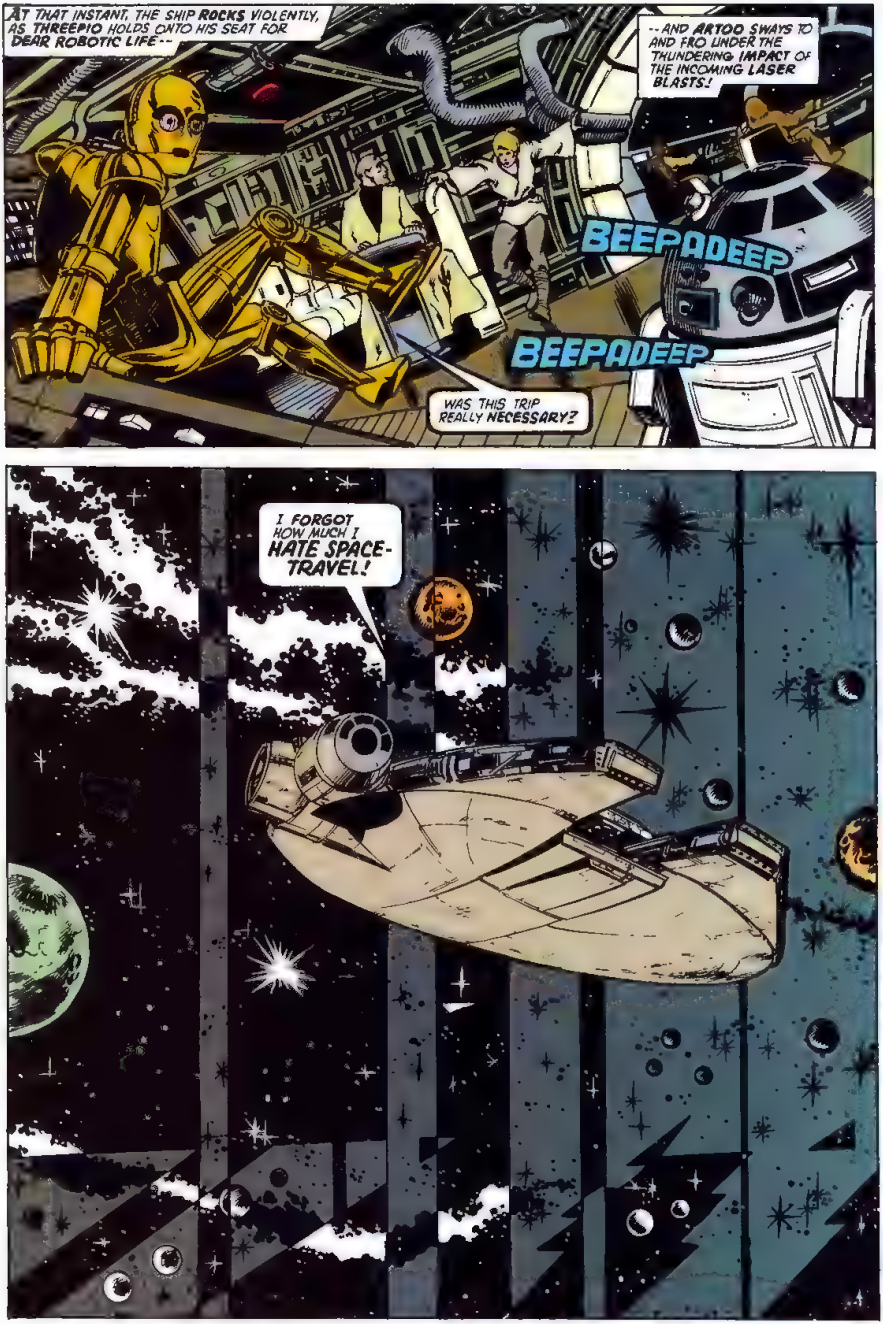

JUST THEN THE ENTIRE SPACECRAFT SHUDDERS-- AS A BLINDING EXPLOSION FLASHES JUST OUTSIDE THE VIEWPORTS -
--AND EVEN A NEAR MISS ALMOST OVERCOMES THE PHOTOTROPHIC SHIELDING!
HERE'S WHERE IT STARTS GETTING INTERESTING!

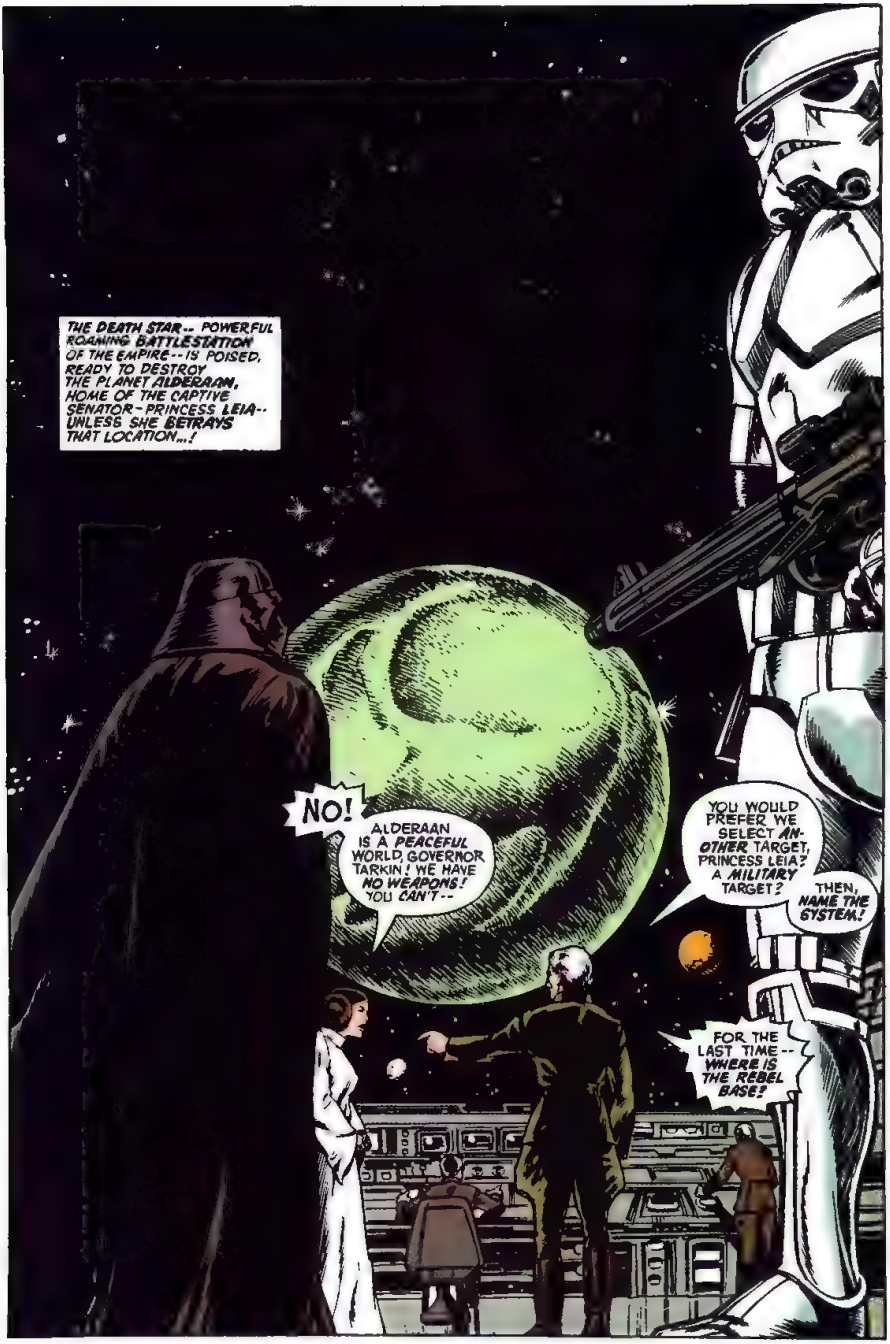
WELL? HOW LONG BEFORE YOU CAN MAKE THE JUMP TO LIGHT SPEED?
IT'LL TAKE A FEW MINUTES FOR THE NAVI-COMPUTER TO CALCULATE THE COORDINATES

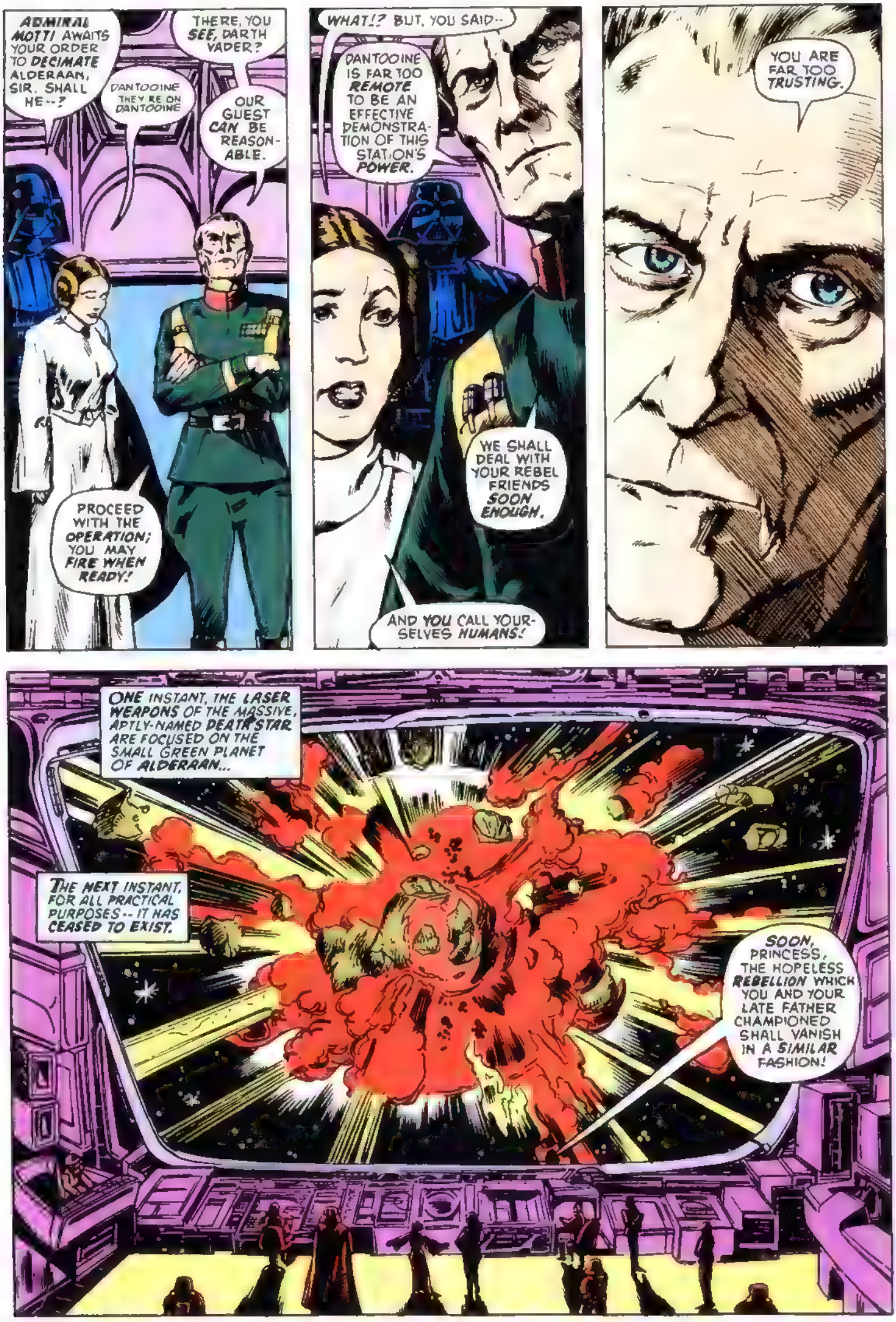
A FEW MINUTES!? AT THE RATE THEY'RE GAINING--
TRAVELING THRU HYPER-SPACE ISN'T LIKE DUSTING CROPS, BOY!
WITHOUT THE PROPER CALCULATIONS, WE COULD PASS RIGHT THROUGH A STAR, OR BOUNCE TOO NEAR A SUPERNOVA..

AND THAT WOULD END OUR LITTLE TRIP-- REAL QUICK!

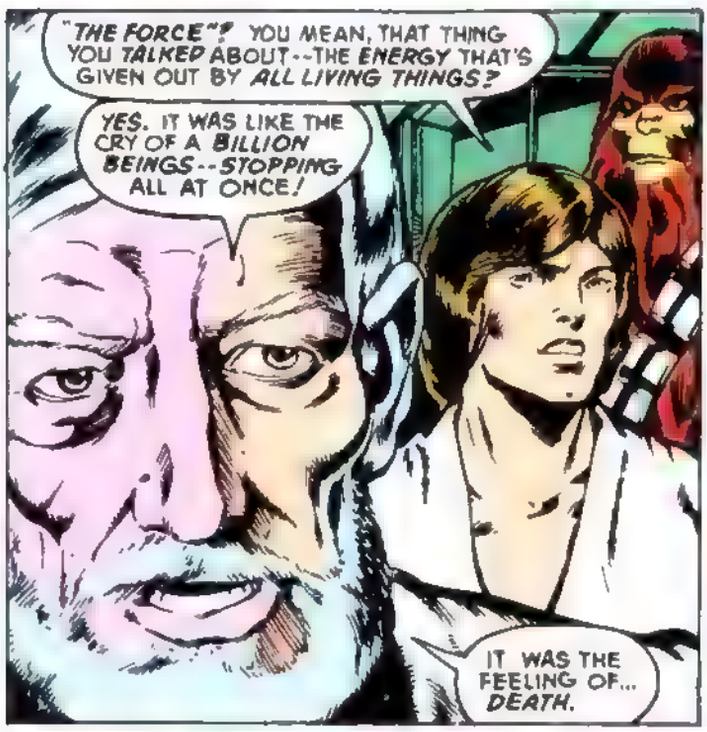

WHAT'S THAT?
WE'RE LOSING A DEFLECTOR SHIELD!
STRAP YOUR-SELVES IN!
WE'RE READY TO MAKE THE JUMP TO LIGHT SPEED!


AT THAT INSTANT, THE SHIP ROCKS VIOLENTLY, AS THREEPIO HOLDS ONTO HIS SEAT FOR DEAR ROBOTIC LIFE--
--AND ARTOO SWAYS TO AND FRO UNDER THE THUNDERING IMPACT OF THE INCOMING LASER BLASTS!
BEEPADEEP
BEEPADEEP
WAS THIS TRIP REALLY NECESSARY?
I FORGOT HOW MUCH I HATE SPACE-TRAVEL!

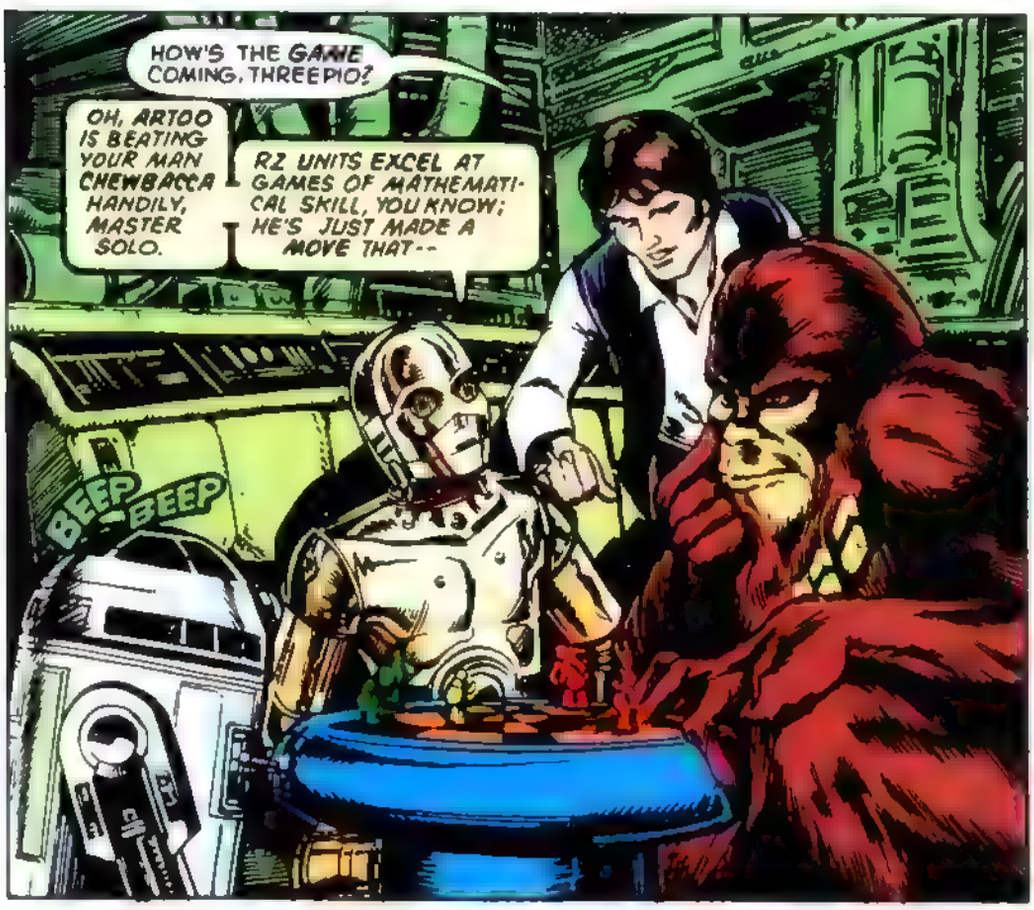

THE DEATH STAR-- POWERFUL ROAMING BATTLESTATION OF THE EMPIRE--IS POISED, READY TO DESTROY THE PLANET ALDERAAN, HOME OF THE CAPTIVE SENATOR-PRINCESS LEIA-- UNLESS SHE BETRAYS THAT LOCATION...!
NO!
ALDERAAN IS A PEACEFUL WORLD, GOVERNOR TARKIN! WE HAVE NO WEAPONS! YOU CAN'T--
YOU WOULD PREFER WE SELECT ANOTHER TARGET, PRINCESS LEIA? A MILITARY TARGET?
THEN, NAME THE SYSTEM!
FOR THE LAST TIME-- WHERE IS THE REBEL BASE?


ADMIRAL MOTTI AWAITS YOUR ORDER TO DECIMATE ALDERAAN, SIR. SHALL HE--?
THERE, YOU SEE, DARTH VADER?
DANTOOINE THEY'RE ON DANTOOINE
OUR GUEST CAN BE REASONABLE.
PROCEED WITH THE OPERATION; YOU MAY FIRE WHEN READY!
WHAT!? BUT, YOU SAID--
DANTOOINE IS FAR TOO REMOTE TO BE AN EFFECTIVE DEMONSTRATION OF THIS STATION'S POWER.
WE SHALL DEAL WITH YOUR REBEL FRIENDS SOON ENOUGH.
AND YOU CALL YOURSELVES HUMANS!
YOU ARE FAR TOO TRUSTING.
ONE INSTANT, THE LASER WEAPONS OF THE MASSIVE, APTLY-NAMED DEATH STAR ARE FOCUSED ON THE SMALL GREEN PLANET OF ALDERAAN...
THE NEXT INSTANT, FOR ALL PRACTICAL PURPOSES -- IT HAS CEASED TO EXIST.
SOON, PRINCESS, THE HOPELESS REBELLION WHICH YOU AND YOUR LATE FATHER CHAMPIONED SHALL VANISH IN A SIMILAR FASHION!

AND, AT THAT SELFSAME MOMENT, DEEP IN HYPERSPACE...
UNNNH..!
BEN KENOBI--ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
WHAT'S WRONG? YOU LOOK FAINT!
I FELT--A SUDDEN GREAT EBBING IN "THE FORCE," LUKE.

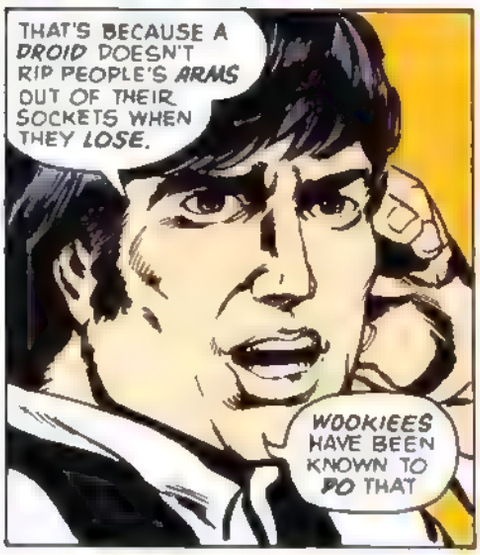

"THE FORCE"? YOU MEAN, THAT THING YOU TALKED ABOUT--THE ENERGY THAT'S GIVEN OUT BY ALL LIVING THINGS?
YES. IT WAS LIKE THE CRY OF A BILLION BEINGS--STOPPING ALL AT ONCE!
IT WAS THE FEELING OF... DEATH.

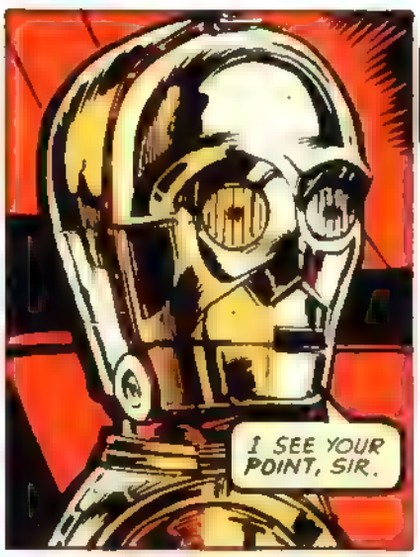
WELL, YOU CAN ALL STOP WORRYING ABOUT THOSE IMPERIAL STARSHIPS THAT WERE PURSUING US; I TOLD YOU WE'D LOSE 'EM, I--
DON'T EVERY-BODY THANK ME AT ONCE!
ANYWAY, I CALCULATE OUR ARRIVAL ON ALDERAAN AT 0200.


HOW'S THE GAME COMING, THREEPIO?
OH, ARTOO IS BEATING YOUR MAN CHEWBACCA HANDILY, MASTER SOLO.
R2 UNITS EXCEL AT GAMES OF MATHEMATICAL SKILL, YOU KNOW; HE'S JUST MADE A MOVE THAT--
BEEP-BEEP

GUH-RUNK! GUH-RONK!

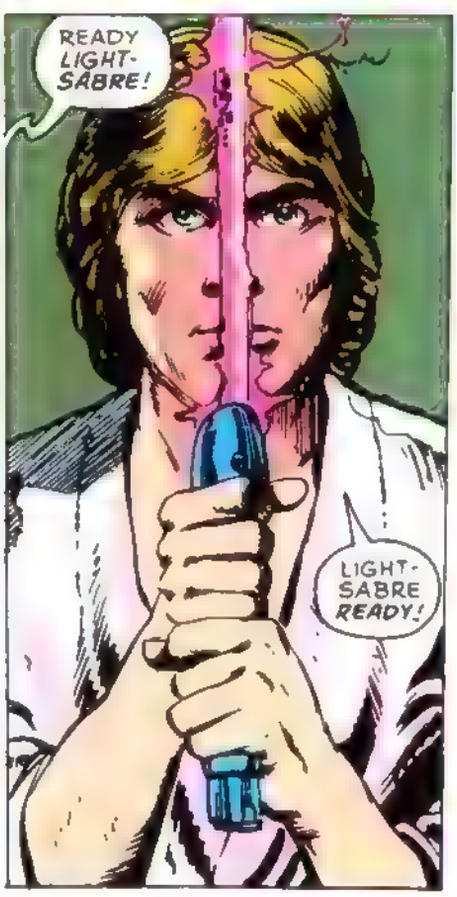
NOW, NOW! ARTOO MADE A FAIR MOVE, AND SCREAMING ABOUT IT CAN'T HELP YOU.
LET HIM HAVE IT! IT'S NOT WISE TO UPSET A WOOKIEE LIKE CHEWBACCA!
BUT, SIR, NO ONE WORRIES ABOUT UPSETTING A DROID!


THAT'S BECAUSE A DROID DOESN'T RIP PEOPLE'S ARMS OUT OF THEIR SOCKETS WHEN THEY LOSE.
WOOKIEES HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO DO THAT

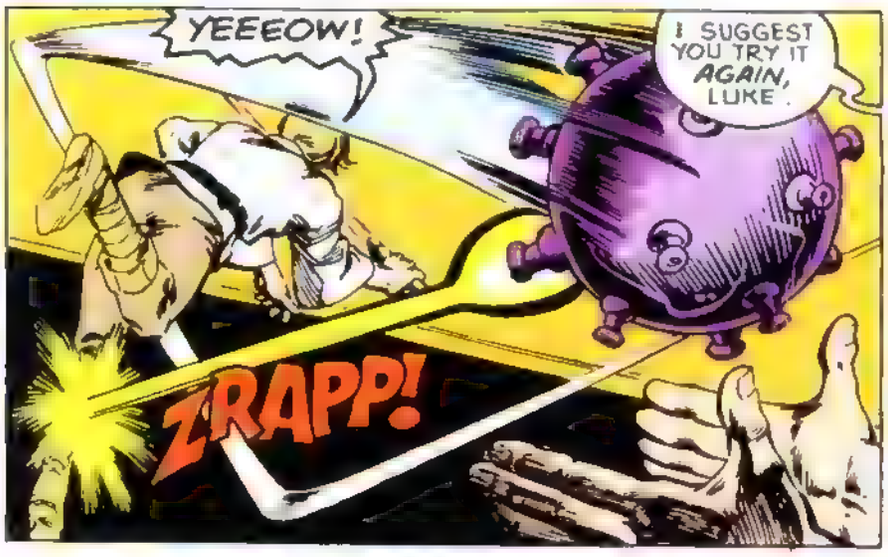

I SEE YOUR POINT, SIR.

I SUGGEST A NEW STRATEGY, ARTOO.
LET.. THE WOOKIEE.. WIN!
BEEP

MEANWHILE, YOUNG LUKE SKYWALKER IS OTHERWISE OCCUPIED...
YOU'D BEST CONTINUE YOUR EXERCISES, LAD.
YES, BEN KENOBI!


READY LIGHT-SABRE!
LIGHT-SABRE READY!

THEN HERE COMES THE "REMOTE"!
WATCH OUT FOR ITS SENSORS, LAD! THEY'LL..

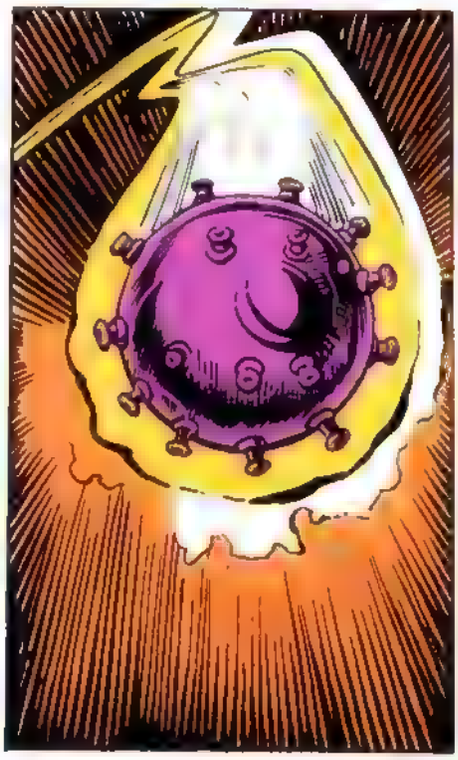

YEEEOW!
I SUGGEST YOU TRY IT AGAIN, LUKE.
ZRAPP!

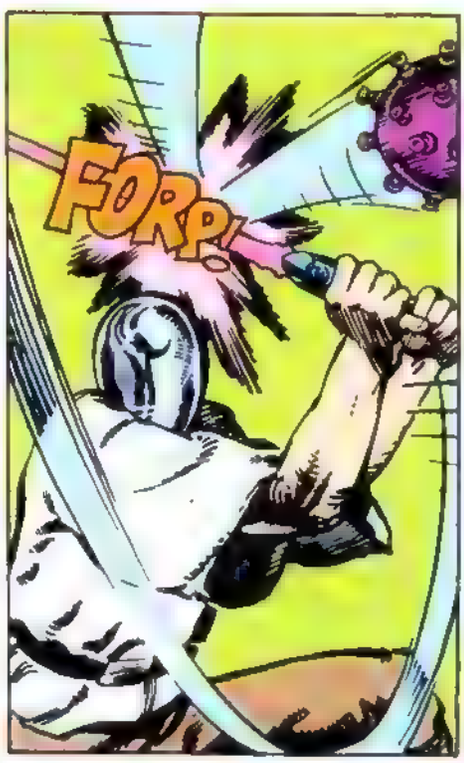
..THIS TIME, WEARING THIS HELMET.
BUT NOW I CAN'T EVEN SEE!
HOW CAN I FIGHT?

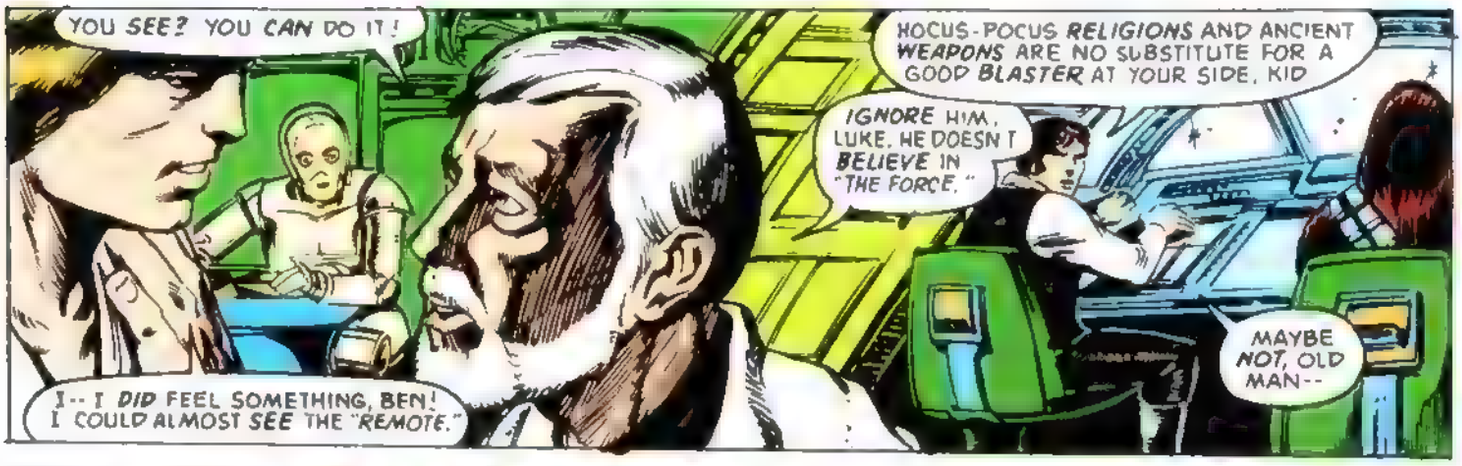
YOUR EYES CAN DECEIVE YOU DON'T TRUST THEM!
YOU MEAN THAT IT CONTROLS YOUR ACTIONS?
REMEMBER, A TRUE JEDI KNIGHT SUCH AS YOUR FATHER AND I WERE CAN FEEL "THE FORCE" FLOWING FROM HIM
YES--BUT IT ALSO OBEYS YOUR COMMANDS.

SWISSSH

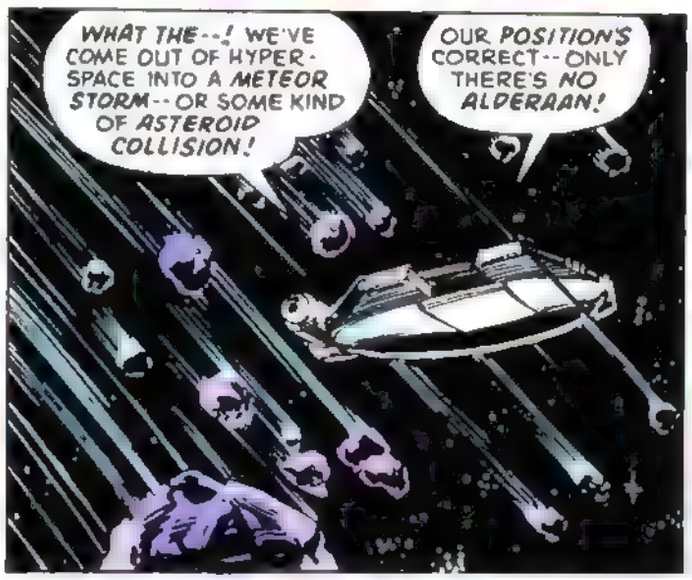
STRETCH OUT WITH YOUR FEELINGS, LUKE--IN THE DARK!



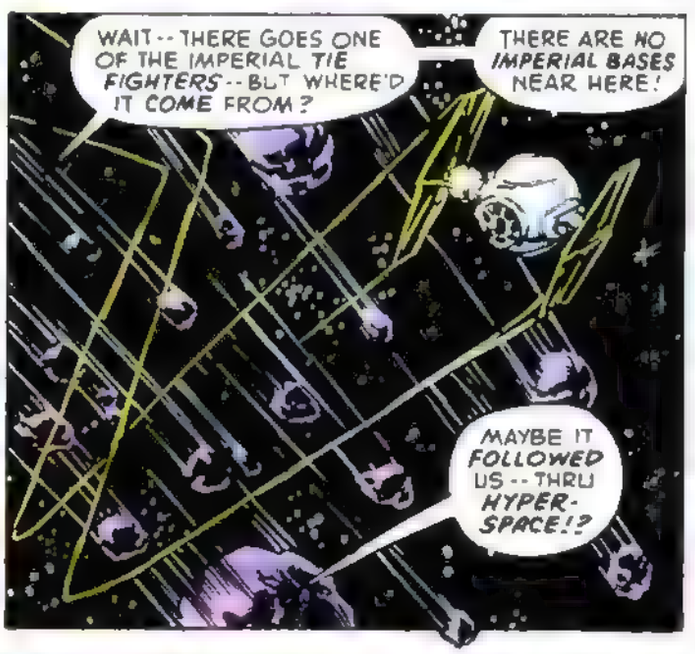

FORP!

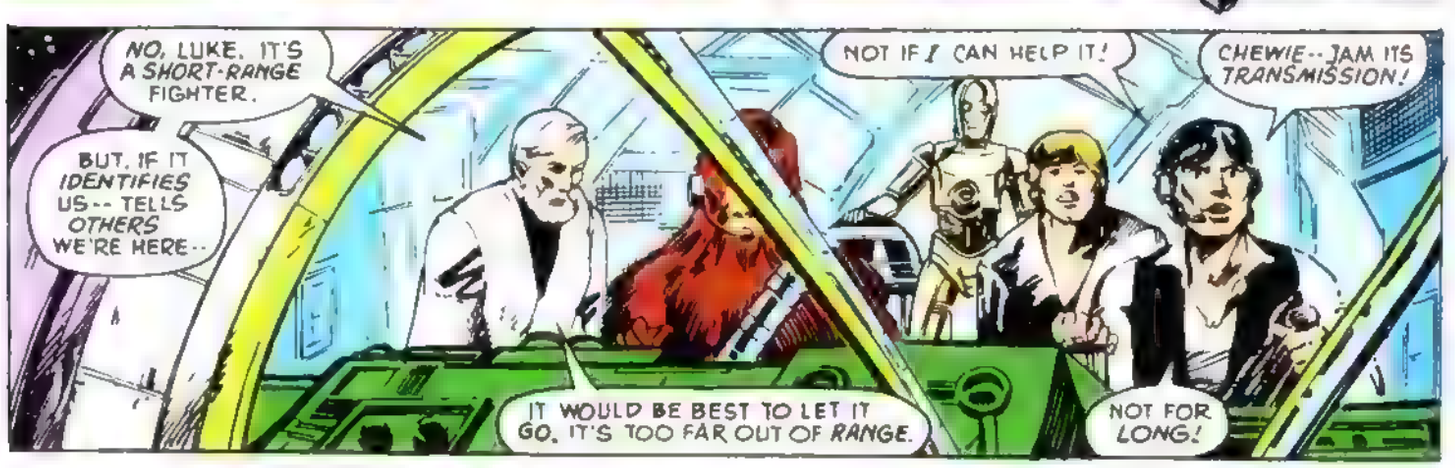

YOU SEE? YOU CAN DO IT!
I-- I DID FEEL SOMETHING, BEN! I COULD ALMOST SEE THE "REMOTE."
HOCUS-POCUS RELIGIONS AND ANCIENT WEAPONS ARE NO SUBSTITUTE FOR A GOOD BLASTER AT YOUR SIDE, KID
IGNORE HIM, LUKE. HE DOESN'T BELIEVE IN "THE FORCE."
MAYBE NOT, OLD MAN--

BUT I DO BELIEVE WE'RE SLOWING DOWN TO SUB-LIGHT SPEED.
NEXT STOP, ALDERAAN! WE--


WHAT THE--! WE'VE COME OUT OF HYPER-SPACE INTO A METEOR STORM--OR SOME KIND OF ASTEROID COLLISION!
OUR POSITION'S CORRECT--ONLY THERE'S NO ALDERAAN!

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, SOLO? WHERE IS IT?
THAT'S WHAT I AM TALKING ABOUT, YOUNG-STER--IT'S NOT THERE!
ALDERAAN'S BEEN BLOWN AWAY--TOTALLY!


WAIT--THERE GOES ONE OF THE IMPERIAL TIE FIGHTERS--BUT WHERE'D IT COME FROM?
THERE ARE NO IMPERIAL BASES NEAR HERE!
MAYBE IT FOLLOWED US--THRU HYPER-SPACE!?


NO, LUKE, IT'S A SHORT-RANGE FIGHTER.
BUT, IF IT IDENTIFIES US--TELLS OTHERS WE'RE HERE--
IT WOULD BE BEST TO LET IT GO. IT'S TOO FAR OUT OF RANGE.
NOT IF I CAN HELP IT!
CHEWIE--JAM ITS TRANSMISSION!
NOT FOR LONG!

HE'S HEADING FOR THAT SMALL MOON - BUT WE'RE GAIN-ING ON HIM!
THAT'S NO MOON, MR SOLO. IT'S A SPACE STATION.
YOU'RE CRAZY! IT'S WAY TOO BIG TO BE A
HOLY--!
I'VE GOT A BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS.
YOU'RE RIGHT THERE, THREEPIO! FULL REVERSE, CHEWIE!
CHREE CHREE
LOCK IN THE AUXILIARY POWER!
WHY ARE WE STILL MOVING TOWARD IT?
WE'RE CAUGHT IN A TRACTOR BEAM! IT'S DRAGGING US IN!
BUT--WOULD YOU LOOK AT IT, KID--?
I'M FULL POWER! IT'S NO USE. I'M GOING TO HAVE TO SHUT DOWN!
YOU MEAN THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN--?

-- WOULD YOU LOOK AT THE SIZE OF THAT THING!?
WELL, THEY'RE STILL NOT GOING TO SUCK HAN SOLO UP LIKE SO MUCH SPACE DUST--
-- NOT WITHOUT A FIGHT!
IF IT IS A FIGHT YOU CANNOT WIN, MR SOLO..
THERE ARE MANY ALTERNA-TIVES TO FIGHTING.

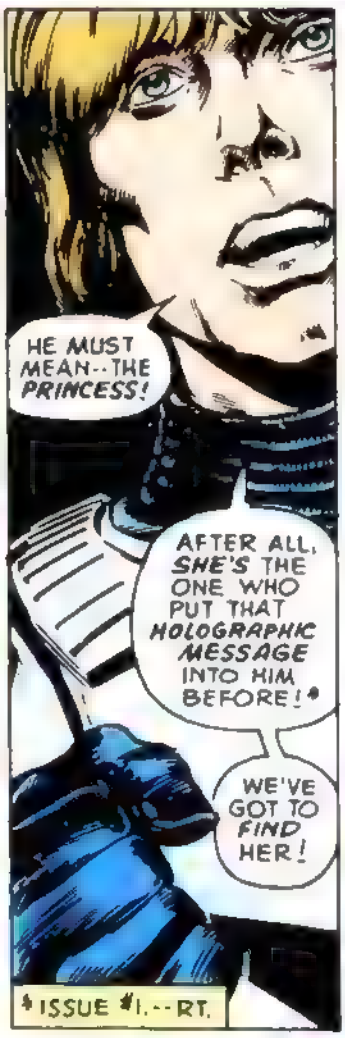
AT THAT PRECISE MOMENT, INSIDE THE HUGE STATION...
THE SCOUT SHIPS TO DANTOOINE HAVE FOUND THE REMAINS OF A REBEL BASE, GOVERNOR -- AND LORD VADER.
SHE LIED. SHE LIED TO US!
BUT, THEY ESTIMATE IT HAS BEEN DESERTED FOR SOME TIME.
I TOLD YOU SHE WOULD NEVER CONSCIOUSLY BETRAY THE REBELLION--
--UNLESS SHE THOUGHT SHE COULD DESTROY THIS STATION IN THE PROCESS!
TERMINATE HER-- IMMEDIATELY!
AND LOSE YOUR ONLY LINK TO THE REBEL BASE?
SHE CAN STILL BE OF VALUE TO US
I'LL FIND THAT HIDDEN FORTRESS-- IF I HAVE TO DESTROY EVERY STAR SYSTEM IN THIS SECTOR!
NO DOUBT, GOVERNOR TARKIN...
... BUT, IN THE MEANTIME, I'VE RECEIVED A REPORT THAT WE HAVE CAPTURED THE SAME CORELLIAN FREIGHTER WHICH BLASTED ITS WAY OUT OF THE QUARANTINE ON MOS EISLEY.
THEY MUST HAVE BEEN TRYING TO RETURN THE STOLEN DATA TAPES TO THE PRINCESS.*
WE MIGHT BE OF SOME HELP THERE..!
* SEE LAST ISSUE. --ROY
SOON, IN A SPRAWLING HANG-BAY OF THE GREAT DEATH STAR...
NO ONE ABOARD, LORD VADER!
SHIP'S LOG SAYS THE CREW ABANDONED SHIP RIGHT AFTER TAKEOFF.
NO DROIDS ON BOARD, EITHER.
KEEP CHECKING! I SENSE SOMETHING -- A PRESENCE, SUCH AS I HAVEN'T FELT SINCE--
HALTING IN MID-SENTENCE, DARTH VADER TURNS QUICKLY--AND EXITS.
AS, INSIDE THE CAPTIVE SHIP...
THIS WON'T WORK, THOUGH--WE'LL NEVER GET PAST THAT TRACTOR BEAM!
WHEW! NEVER THOUGHT I'D USE THESE COMPARTMENTS FOR SMUGGLING MYSELF!
YOU LEAVE THAT TO ME.
YOU'RE A DAMN FOOL!
WHO IS MORE FOOLISH-- THE FOOL, OR THE MAN WHO FOLLOWS HIM?

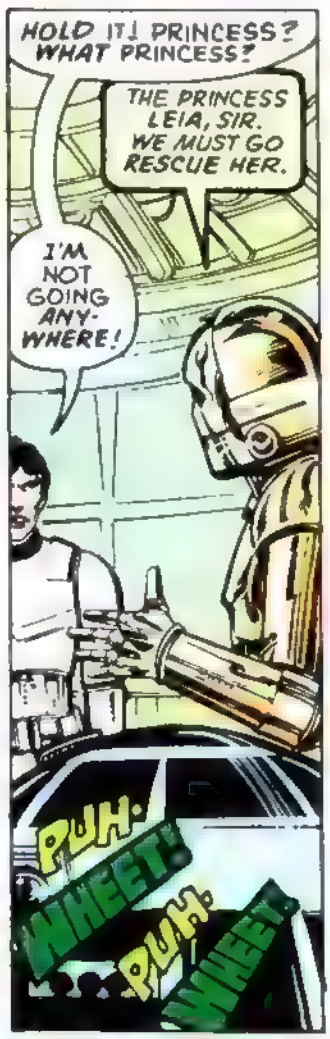
EVEN CRACK IMPERIAL TROOPERS -- THOSE CRUEL, MURDEROUS GUARDIANS OF A FAR FLUNG GALACTIC EMPIRE -- CANNOT THOROUGHLY SEARCH A WHOLE FREIGHTER WITHOUT THE PROPER SCANNING EQUIPMENT.
BUT, WHEN A PAIR OF THE ARMORED SOLDIERS CARRY THE HUGE SENSORY APPARATUS ONTO THE CAPTURED CORELLIAN SHIP.
..THEY HAVE AN UNEXPECTED WELCOMING PARTY!
SHH! HERE THEY COME!
MOMENTS LATER, HIS VISI-SCREEN SHOWING NO GUARDS ON DUTY, A GANTRY OFFICER GETS WORRIED..
TX-421! WHY AREN'T YOU AT YOUR POST?
TX-421, DO YOU COPY?
JUST THEN, ONE TROOPER REAPPEARS.
THE MEANING OF HIS HAND SIGNAL IS CLEAR:
TAKE OVER HERE! OBVIOUSLY, WE'VE GOT ANOTHER BAD TRANSMITTER.
I'M GOING DOWN TO SEE--
--WHAT I CAN-- YYIIII!
FHLAP!
NRRLK!

GAROOO!
EVEN AS THE TOWERING CHEWBACCA FLATTENS THE STARTLED OFFICER WITH A SINGLE BLOW, ANOTHER "IMPERIAL TROOPER" APPEARS AT THE DOORWAY...
WHUMP!
ZZIK!
--TO BLAST THE ONE WITHIN, BEFORE HE CAN REACH HIS OWN WEAPON!
BETWEEN HIS HOWLING AND YOU BLASTING EVERYTHING IN SIGHT, SOLO, IT'S A WONDER THE ENTIRE STATION DOESN'T KNOW WE'RE HERE!
LET 'EM COME! I DON'T LIKE ALL THIS SNEAKING AROUND.
THREEPIO-- PLUG IN THE R2 UNIT!
HE SHOULD BE ABLE TO READ THE ENTIRE IMPERIAL COMPUTER NETWORK.
PLUGGED IN, SIR
THE TRACTOR BEAM IS COUPLED TO THE MAIN REACTOR IN SEVEN LOCATIONS...
WHOOP BOOP K-BEEP
MOST OF THE DATA IS RESTRICTED, SIR...
BUT HE'LL TRY TO GET WHAT THERE IS TO COME THROUGH ON THE MONITOR.
WITH THE TRACTOR BEAM OFF, WE CAN ZOOM OUT OF HERE
WE'RE WITH YOU, BEN!
NO, LUKE. I DON'T THINK THERE IS ANY WAY YOU BOYS CAN HELP IN THIS.
I MUST GO ALONE.

WHATEVER YOU SAY! I'VE ALREADY DONE MORE THAN I BARGAINED FOR ON THIS TRIP!
BEN--I WANT TO GO WITH YOU!
BUT, I THINK PUTTING THAT TRACTOR BEAM OUT OF COMMISSION IS GOING TO TAKE MORE THAN YOUR MAGIC, OLD MAN.
YOUR DESTINY LIES ALONG A DIFFERENT PATH: DELIVER THE DROIDS TO THE REBEL FORCES.
TRUST YOUR FEELINGS, LUKE.
"THE FORCE" IS WITH YOU!

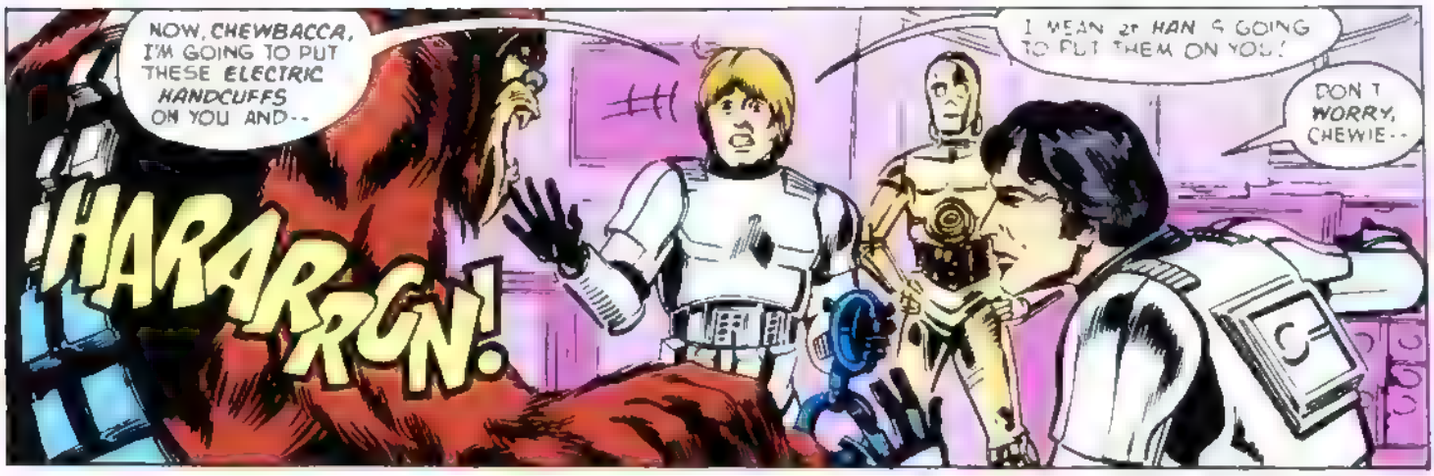
HE'S GONE! I--HEY! WHAT'S WITH ARTOO?
I'M NOT SURE, SIR. HE KEEPS REPEATING: "SHE'S HERE!"
PUH-
WHEET!
PUH-
WHEET!
PUH-
WHEET!


HE MUST MEAN--THE PRINCESS!
AFTER ALL, SHE'S THE ONE WHO PUT THAT HOLOGRAPHIC MESSAGE INTO HIM BEFORE!*
WE'VE GOT TO FIND HER!
*ISSUE #1.--RT.


HOLD IT! PRINCESS? WHAT PRINCESS?
THE PRINCESS LEIA, SIR. WE MUST GO RESCUE HER.
I'M NOT GOING ANY-WHERE!
PUH-
WHEET!
PUH-
WHEET!

BUT, I'VE SEEN HER, SOLO! SHE'S BEAUTIFUL!
SO'S LIFE.
SHE'S RICH!
SO'S--huh? RICH!
YES--AND IF WE RESCUE HER, THE REWARD'LL BE MORE WEALTH THAN YOU CAN IMAGINE!
I DON'T KNOW! I CAN IMAGINE QUITE A BIT.

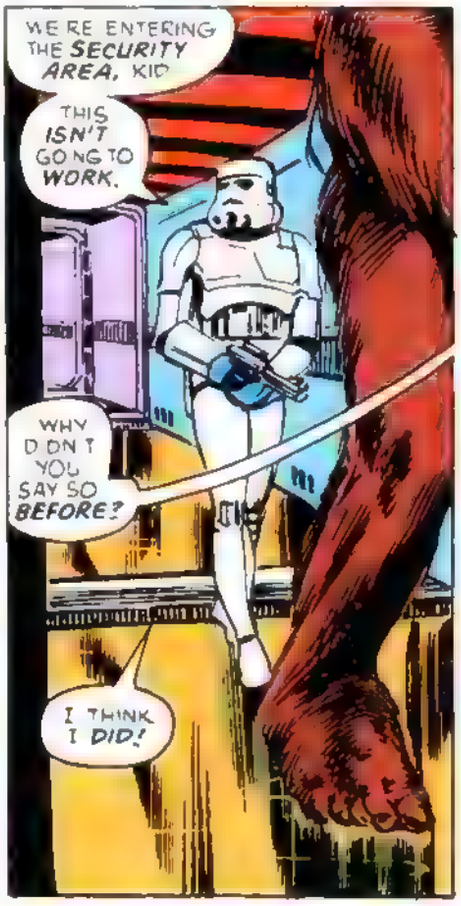
YOU'LL GET IT!
WHAT DO YOU THINK, CHEWIE?
HNNH!
PUH-
WHEE!
ALL RIGHT, KID, BUT YOU'D BETTER BE RIGHT ABOUT THIS!
WHAT'S YOUR PLAN?

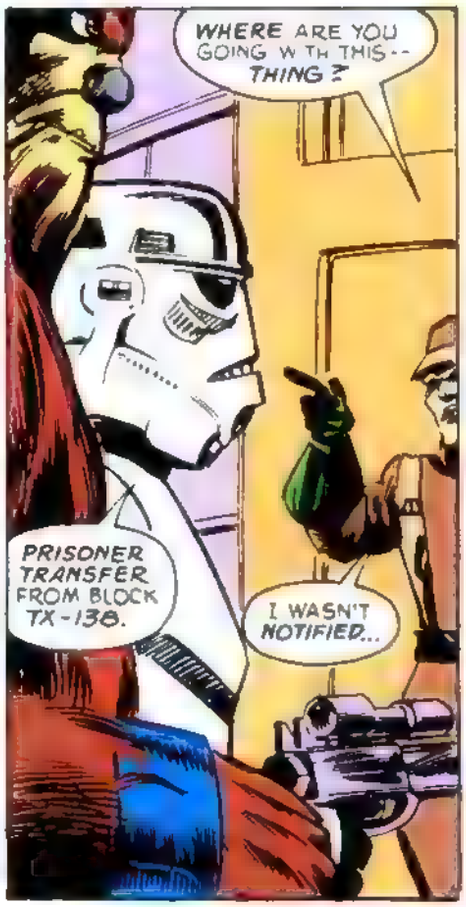

NOW, CHEWBACCA, I'M GOING TO PUT THESE ELECTRIC HANDCUFFS ON YOU AND--
HARARRGN!
I MEAN 2r HAN S GOING TO PUT THEM ON YOU!
DON T WORRY, CHEWIE--

I THINK I KNOW WHAT HE HAS IN MIND.
GHRK!
THREEPIO AND ARTOO WILL STAY HERE--
IT S OUR ONLY CHANCE, SOLO, AND YOU KNOW IT!
TO KEEP CHECKING THAT MONITOR FOR MORE INFORMATION.

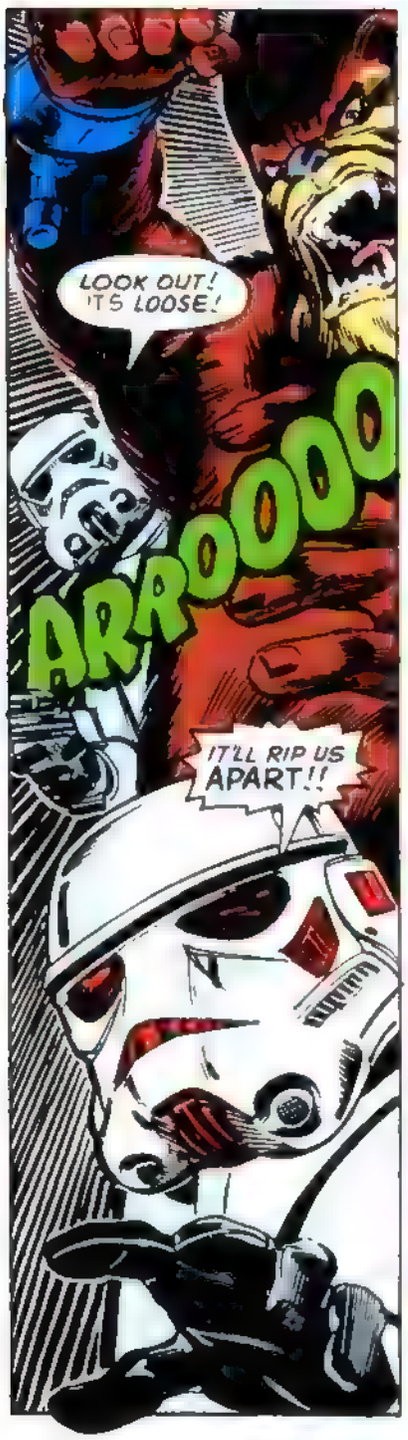
Uh, PARDON ME, LUKE, SIR-- WHAT SHOULD ARTOO AND I DO IF WE'RE DISCOVERED?
HOPE THEY DON T HAVE BLASTERS.
THAT ISN T VERY REASSURING, SIR

MOMENTS LATER, LUKE AND SOLO TRY TO LOOK INCONSPICUOUS IN THEIR CAPTURED ARMOR, AS THEY WAIT FOR THE VACUUM ELEVATOR TO ARRIVE.
FEW PASSERSBY GIVE THE GIANT WOOKIEE A CURIOUS GLANCE
THEY ARE USED TO HELP-LESS PRISONERS-- EVEN POWERFUL ONES.

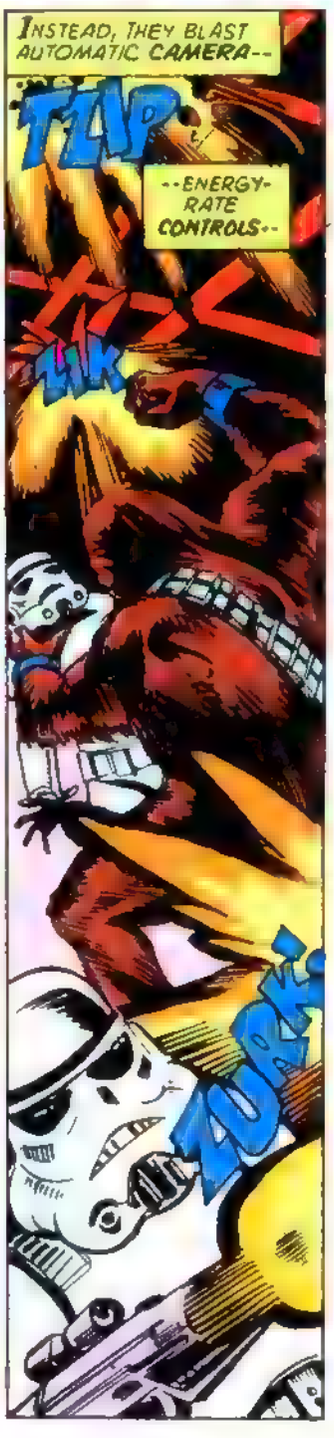

WE RE ENTERING THE SECURITY AREA, KID
THIS ISN'T GOING TO WORK.
WHY D DN T YOU SAY SO BEFORE?
I THINK I DID!


WHERE ARE YOU GOING W TH THIS-- THING?
PRISONER TRANSFER FROM BLOCK TX-130.
I WASN'T NOTIFIED..

WAIT THERE! I'LL HAVE TO CLEAR IT.
I'LL PUNCH IN, AND MAKE CERTAIN THAT BLOCK IX 138 IS UNOCCUPIED.
ONLY THREE OTHER TROOPERS IN THIS AREA, KID.
I GUESS THIS IS WHERE WE MAKE OUR MOVE.
CHECK

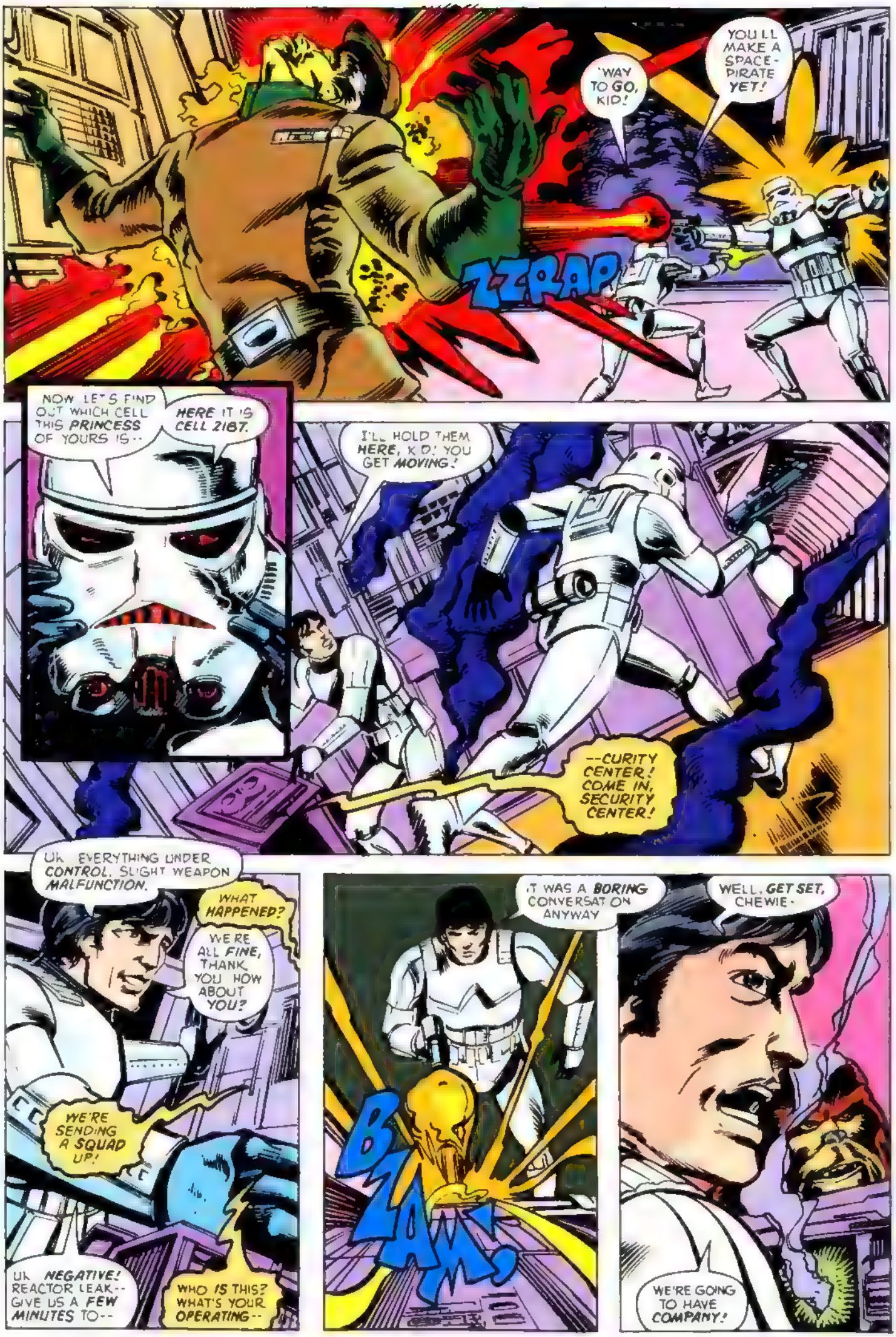

LOOK OUT! IT'S LOOSE!
ARROOOO
IT'LL RIP US APART!!

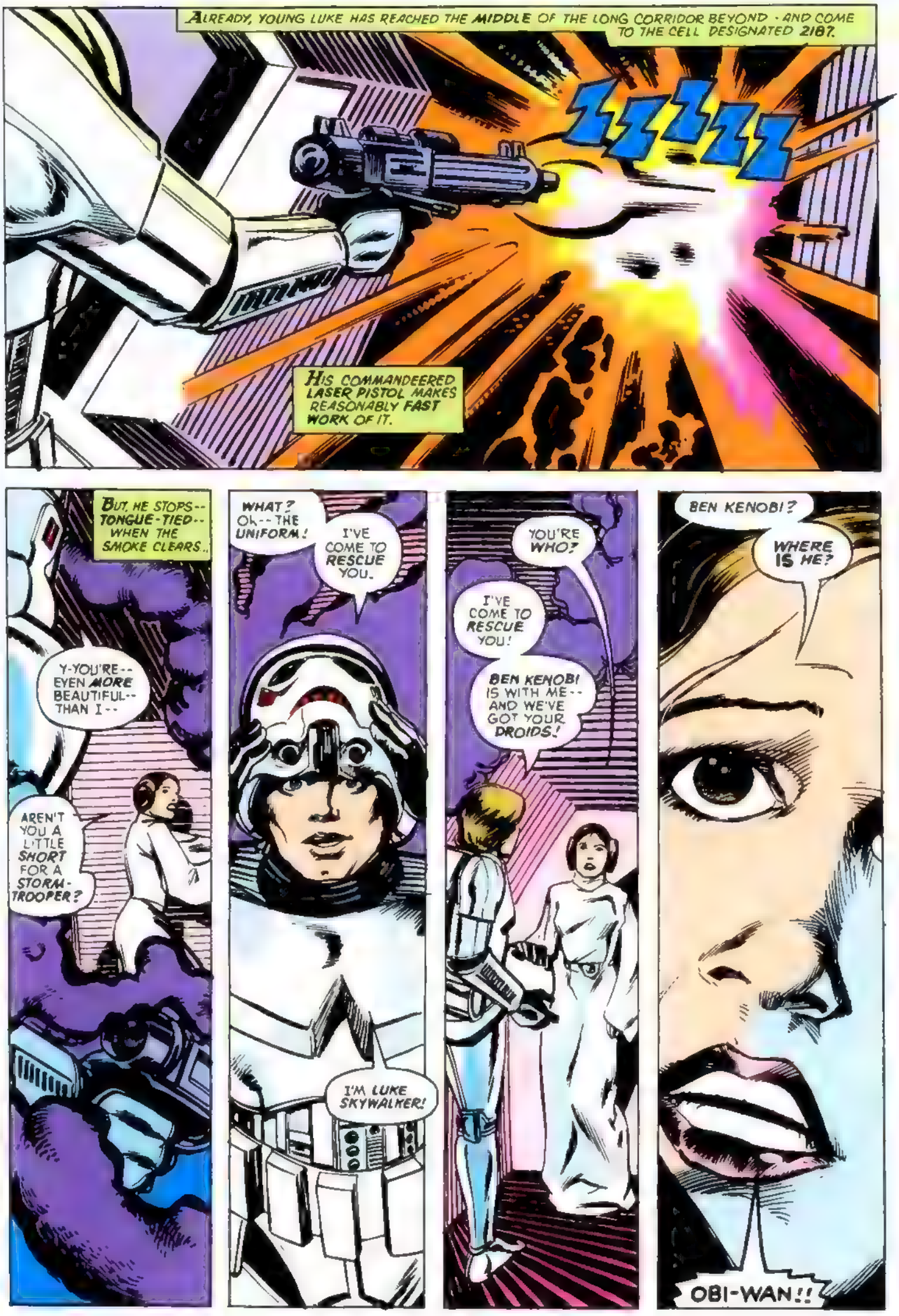
NEXT MOMENT, LUKE AND HAN ARE BLASTING AWAY: THEIR REACTION EXCELLENT, THEIR ENTHUSIASM UNDENIABLE, THEIR AIM EXECRABLE.
ZIK
GNRRR
ZIK
NOT A SINGLE SHOT COMES CLOSE TO THE RAGING WOOKIEE.


INSTEAD, THEY BLAST AUTOMATIC CAMERA--
TZIP
--ENERGY-RATE CONTROLS--
ZIK
ZURK

ZZRK
HNGH
FRAP
--AND, SOMEWHERE ALONG THE LINE, TWO OF THE TROOPERS!

WITHIN SECONDS, A STAR SYSTEM'S WORTH OF VALUABLE ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT IS RENDERED USELESS...
SZZRAK
ZIK
AT THIS POINT THE REMAINING TROOPER - TRAINED MORE FOR ACTION THAN RATIONAL ANALYSIS -- SUDDENLY REALIZES THE TWO NEWCOMERS ARE DANGEROUS..
FZZZP!
--AND HE OPENS FIRE!
BUT, IT'S TOO LATE--
--AS HAN SOLO QUICKLY DEMONSTRATES --!
KZIK
IZZZ
SOLO! THE OFFICER IN CHARGE-- HE'S GOING TO PUSH THE ALARM SYSTEM--!
GNARK
THEN STOP HIM KID!
STOP HIM!


'WAY TO GO, KID!
YOU'LL MAKE A SPACE-PIRATE YET!
ZZRAP
NOW LET'S FIND OUT WHICH CELL THIS PRINCESS OF YOURS IS--
HERE IT IS CELL 2187.
I'LL HOLD THEM HERE, K-D! YOU GET MOVING!
--CURITY CENTER! COME IN, SECURITY CENTER!
UK EVERYTHING UNDER CONTROL. SLIGHT WEAPON MALFUNCTION.
WHAT HAPPENED?
WE'RE ALL FINE, THANK YOU HOW ABOUT YOU?
WE'RE SENDING A SQUAD UP!
UK NEGATIVE! REACTOR LEAK-- GIVE US A FEW MINUTES TO--
WHO IS THIS? WHAT'S YOUR OPERATING--
IT WAS A BORING CONVERSAT ON ANYWAY
BLAM!
WELL, GET SET, CHEWIE-
WE'RE GOING TO HAVE COMPANY!


ALREADY, YOUNG LUKE HAS REACHED THE MIDDLE OF THE LONG CORRIDOR BEYOND - AND COME TO THE CELL DESIGNATED 2187.
ZZZZZ
HIS COMMANDEERED LASER PISTOL MAKES REASONABLY FAST WORK OF IT.
BUT, HE STOPS-- TONGUE-TIED-- WHEN THE SMOKE CLEARS..
Y-YOU'RE-- EVEN MORE BEAUTIFUL-- THAN I--
AREN'T YOU A LITTLE SHORT FOR A STORM-TROOPER?
WHAT? OH-- THE UNIFORM!
I'VE COME TO RESCUE YOU.
I'M LUKE SKYWALKER!
YOU'RE WHO?
I'VE COME TO RESCUE YOU!
BEN KENOBI IS WITH ME-- AND WE'VE GOT YOUR DROIDS!
BEN KENOBI?
WHERE IS HE?
OBI-WAN!!

MEANWHILE, IN THE OUTER SECURITY CHAMBER, A SERIES OF EAR-SHATTERING EXPLOSIONS TEAR A GAPING HOLE IN THE METAL WALL--A HOLE THROUGH WHICH IMPERIAL TROOPERS NOW BEGIN TO EMERGE..
BACK, CHEWIE! WE'VE GOT TO RETREAT!
ZIK
ZIK
ZIK
HRNK!
YOU FOUND HER, eh?
WELL, WE CAN'T GO BACK THAT WAY!
NO, WE CERTAINLY CAN'T
IT LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE MANAGED TO CUT OFF OUR ONLY ESCAPE ROUTE!
Huh? BEGGING YOUR FORGIVENESS, YOUR HIGHNESS--BUT MAYBE YOU'D PREFER IT BACK IN YOUR CELL?
I'D LOVE TO OBLIGE YOU, BUT RIGHT NOW--
--HERE COMES TROUBLE!
ALL RIGHT, CHEWIE--STARTING BLASTING!
IF WE DIE HERE - LET'S TAKE A BUNCH OF 'EM WITH US!
THREEPIO! THREEPIO! WE'VE BEEN CUT OFF! ARE THERE ANY OTHER WAYS OUT?!
THREEPIO! WHERE ARE YOU?
FTIK
ZIK
BUT, LUKE SKYWALKER'S ONLY ANSWER IS THE BLAST OF THE TROOPERS' LASERS COMING CLOSER--CLOSER--!

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Production sketches

The following eleven pages represent a wide array of preproduction sketches by Ralph McQuarrie and John Mollo. The progression from quick sketch to finished character on celluloid is a fascinating transformation to watch and an intriguing glimpse into the process of design.

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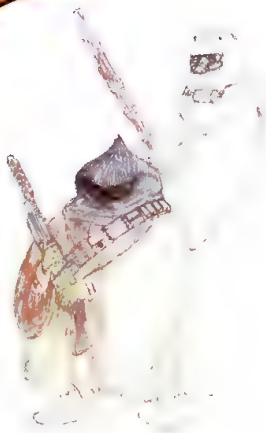

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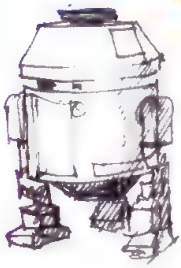

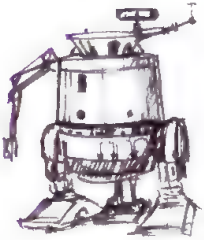

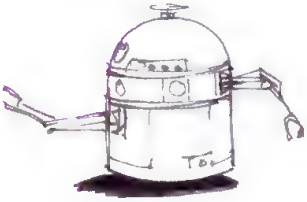

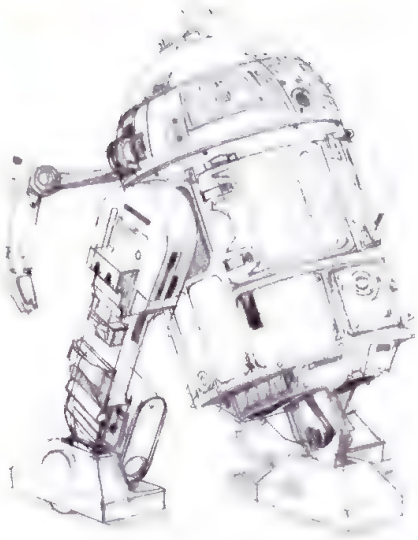

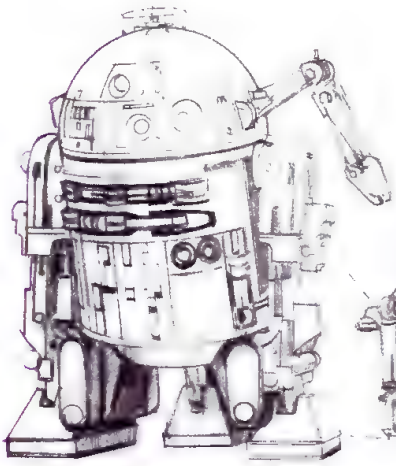

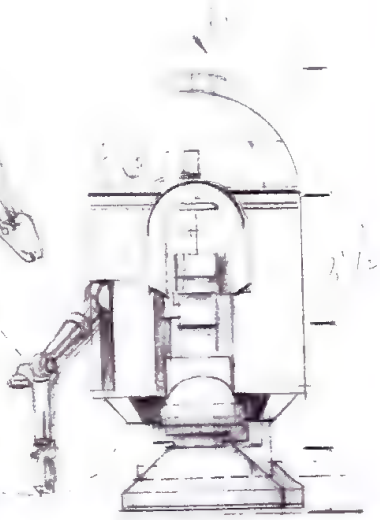

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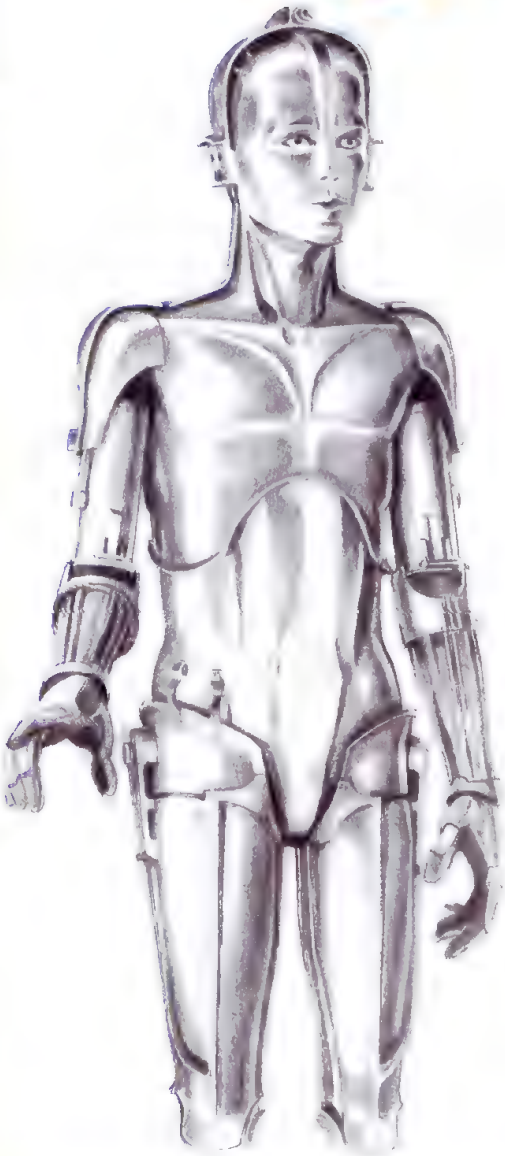

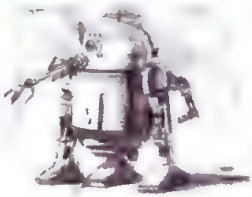

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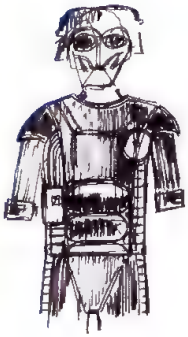

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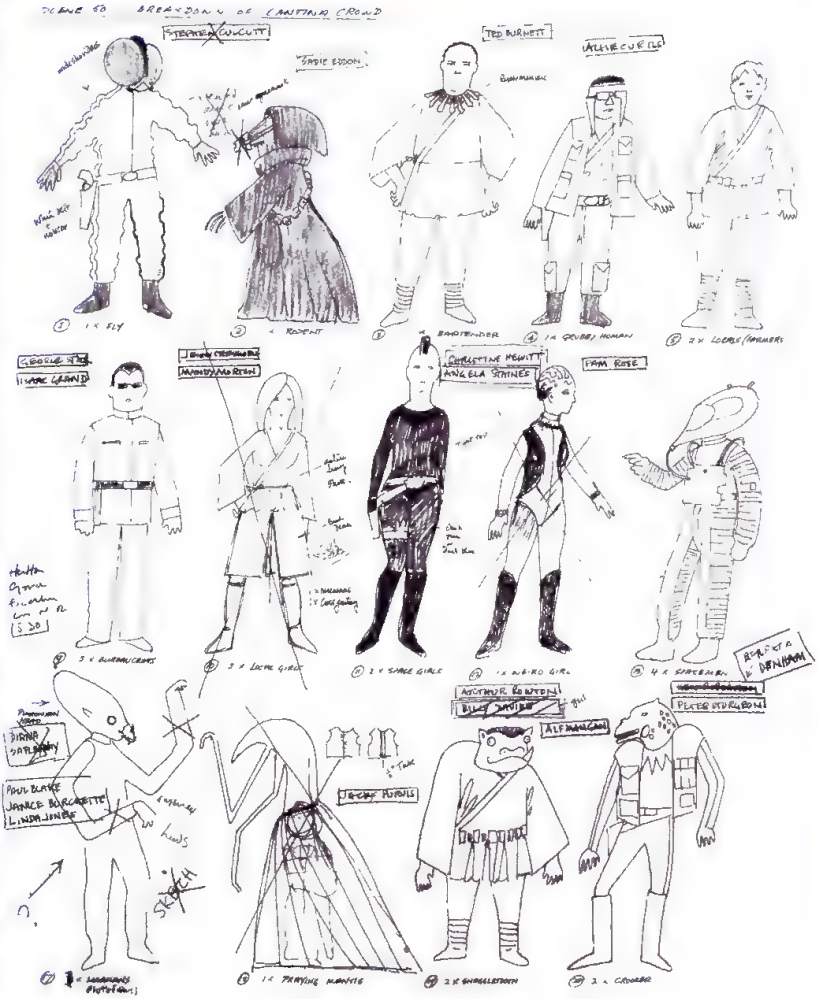

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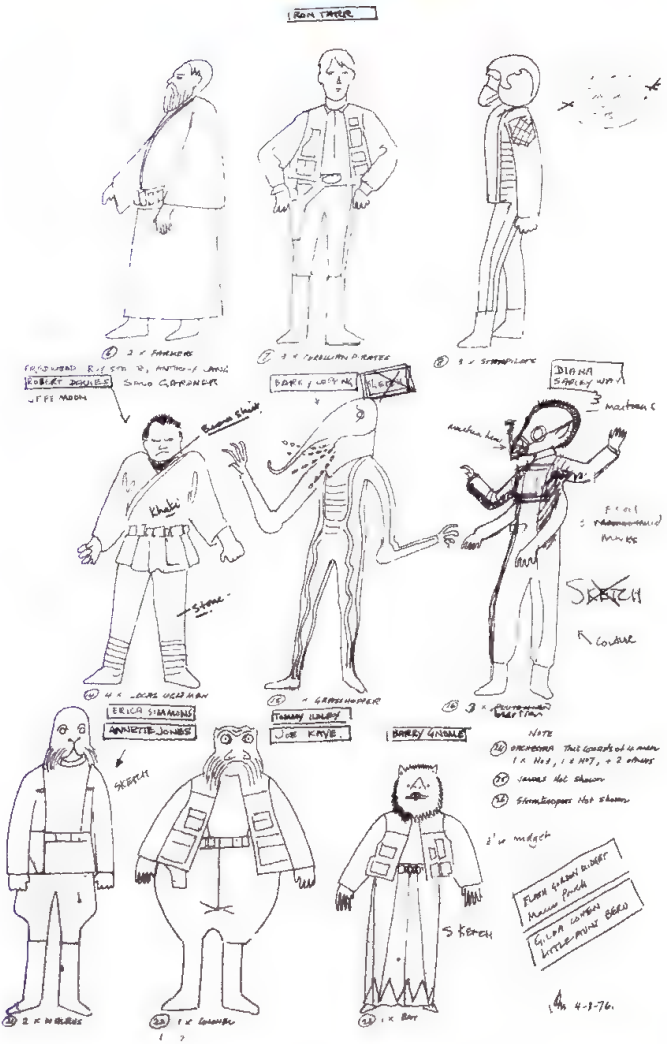

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